



## **Trilateral Susan Rice Still Being Considered As Biden's VP Pick**

Susan Rice is a consummate “deep state” operator who is connected to the elitist Trilateral Commission. She is wicked-smart, short on ethics and well-accepted in elite circles. If such a pair could win in November, she almost certainly would inherit the Presidency before Biden's term is up. □ TN Editor

In the Oval Office many mornings, as Joe Biden sat in a chair next to President Barack Obama, Susan Rice would take her usual spot on a nearby couch and brief them on sensitive national security issues. At other times in the Situation Room, Rice and Biden would sit directly across the table from one another, according to people with knowledge of the setup.

As vice president, Biden would pop into Rice's neighboring office in the White House for some light banter with the national security adviser - or

heavier talk about the difficult issues confronting the Obama administration.

Years later, that relationship has made Rice an unlikely finalist to become Biden's running mate and the first African American woman on a major party ticket, according to people with knowledge of the process and other Biden allies. She has never been elected to political office but has a credential none of her rivals can boast: a lengthy history as Biden's colleague at the highest levels of government.

"Biden spent years essentially beginning his day with a briefing from Susan Rice," said former Obama deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes. "So he definitely knows her."

Biden has frequently said he is looking for a running mate with whom he is "simpatico" and that he aspires to re-create the dynamic he shared with Obama, to whom he was a friend and adviser. That could cut both ways for Rice, who disagreed with Biden on some key foreign policy issues during Obama's first term, when she served as U.N. ambassador, but also forged a kinship with him, particularly once she moved to the White House in 2013, according to colleagues.

Rice has been a frequent guest on television news shows in recent months, impressing Biden allies who were unsure how she would fare under heightened public scrutiny. To broaden her public persona beyond the foreign policy issues that have dominated her career, Rice has written op-eds on issues such as voting rights, racial justice, D.C. statehood and the Trump administration's performance in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

She has eschewed the traditional strategy of demurring when asked about the vice presidential nomination, confidently stating in a recent interview on NBC's "Meet The Press" that Biden "needs to make the decision as to who he thinks will be his best running mate, and I will do my utmost, drawing on my experience of years in government."

Rice is seen by some Biden allies as an underdog to be his running mate, but even many of them say they envision her playing some influential role in a Biden administration - perhaps as secretary of state or in some

other senior position.

“I’ve observed them together in countless meetings. There was clear mutual respect and rapport,” said Valerie Jarrett, a former senior Obama adviser, speaking of Rice and Biden. “She would be a terrific addition to his administration and could fulfill many different roles.”

To many Democrats, Biden’s unique vice presidential search has doubled as a public audition for his administration, casting a spotlight on a small group of Democratic women already being talked up for alternative roles if they don’t end up on the ticket.

The search has been a remarkably open process akin to a mini-campaign, in which some candidates have publicly promoted themselves and others have bowed out of the running – all as Biden has provided a steady trickle of clues about who he is considering, starting with his declaration that he will choose a woman.

Rice, 55, would not be a typical pick. Not only has she never been elected – she has never run for office. Her son has voiced strong public support for President Trump. And she has faced criticism for her initial comments on the 2012 Benghazi attacks that killed four Americans, for which Republicans made her a leading target of a vitriolic and long-running investigation they are eager to reprise. Once well-positioned to be Obama’s second secretary of state, Rice withdrew from consideration after the uproar over her remarks.

“Biden is opening the door and placing Benghazi on the kitchen table if he picks Susan E. Rice,” said Dan Eberhart, an oil industry executive and GOP donor. “Expect Republicans to feast.”

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