

'He talked about his son more than mine': Fathers of Marines killed in Afghanistan blast Biden

By Harriet Alexander For Dailymail.com 00:36 EDT 31 Aug 2021

Emotional fathers of Marines killed in ISIS-K bombing say 'disrespectful' Biden checked his watch EVERY TIME a casket was removed from the plane during dignified transfer: One dad slams the president for talking 'about his son more than mine'

The fathers of two of the U.S. Marines killed in last week have blasted President Joe Biden for repeatedly checking his watch at a ceremony marking the return of the 13 US servicemembers killed.

Mark Schmitz - the father of Lance Corporal Jared Schmitz - and Darin Hoover - the father of Staff Sgt Darin Taylor Hoover Jr. - spoke to Fox News host Sean Hannity on Monday night.

Both claimed the commander in chief did not just check his watch once, but after every casket was removed from the plane.

Hoover also told how he refused to meet with the president at the event.

Schmitz said his own meeting 'didn't go well', and Biden spent more time talking about his own son Beau than Jared Schmitz.



Jared Schmitz, 20, from Missouri, was killed by a suicide bomber while working at Kabul airport on August 26



Taylor Hoover, 31, was another of the 13 members of the U.S. military to die in the attack



Mark Schmitz (left) and Darin Hoover (center) appeared on Sean Hannity's show on Monday





The president appeared to repeatedly check his watch during the ceremony on Sunday

Biden attends transfer of service members killed in Afghanistan

Both fathers said they were particularly upset when Biden repeatedly checked his watch during Sunday's ceremony, as their sons' bodies arrived back in the US.

'The checking of his watch, that didn't happen just once,' said Hoover.

'That happened on every single one that came out of that airplane. It happened on every single one of them.

'They would release the salute, and he would look down at his watch on every last one, all 13, he looked down at his watch.

'As a father, you know, seeing that and the disrespect...'

Schmitz added: 'I leaned into my son's mother's ear and I said, I swear to God, if he checks his watch one more time - and that was probably only four times in.

'I couldn't look at him anymore after that.

'Considering especially the time and why we were there, I found it to be the most disrespectful thing I've ever seen.'



The US Marine Corps posted a photo to Twitter Sunday evening, of the flag-draped caskets of their fallen brethren killed in Thursday's suicide bomb attack in Kabul



The president stood with his hand over his heart as remains were carried in a flag-draped casket by service members at the Dover Air Force Base in Dover, Delaware on Sunday



© AFP via Getty Images

President Joe Biden attended on Sunday the dignified transfer of the remains of service members killed in the Kabul airport attack



The president saluted at the top of the stairs before boarding Air Force One on Sunday morning

The president made the unannounced trip to Dover Air Force Base in on Sunday morning as the caskets of the 13 service members killed in the attack were brought back to the United States.

He stood in silence, his right hand to his chest, as a of flag draped transfer coffins were carried past him from a C-17 Globemaster plane.

But during the ceremony, Biden appears to jerk his left arm up and look down at his watch.

The 13 killed on Thursday were Navy corpsman Max Soviak, Army Staff Sergeant Ryan Knauss, and Marines Hunter Lopez, Rylee McCollum, David Lee Espinoza, Kareem Nikoui, Jared Schmitz, Daegan Page, Taylor Hoover, Humberto Sanchez, Johanny Rosario, Dylan Merola and Nicole Gee.

Their remains arrived at Dover Air Force Base, at 8am for a 'dignified transfer,' the solemn moment when fallen troops return to American soil.

Mark Schmitz, from Missouri, said he was also left disappointed by his meeting with Biden.

'Initially, I wasn't going to meet with him, but then I felt I owed it to my son to at least have some words with him about how I felt,' said Schmitz.

'And it didn't go well.

'He talked a bit more about his own son than we did my own son in that didn't sit well with me.'

Biden's own son Beau served in Iraq, and died in 2015 from a brain tumor, aged 46.

The president has frequently referenced Beau and his service, explaining that he feels kinship with military families and understands the feeling of loss.

Hoover, from Utah, said their family decided to turn down the chance to meet Biden.



Darin Hoover (pictured) told Hannity his family rejected Biden's offer of speaking to them

'We said absolutely not,' he told Hannity.

'We didn't want to deal with them, we didn't want to we didn't want him anywhere near us.

'We as a family decided that that was the way it was going to be.'

Both fathers paid tribute to their sons, with Hoover - whose son was due home on September 15, to retire and marry his fiancée Nicole - describing them all as heroes.

'Every one of them is a hero. There's no doubt,' he said.

'Every last one of them.

'They died with their brothers and their sisters right next to them.

'Doing exactly what they all wanted to do. And that is defending this country.'

How Biden's watch moment echoes both President Nixon and President Bush

President has come under fire after appearing to look at his watch during a ceremony to mark the return of the 13 US service members killed in Thursday's ISIS-K suicide bombing in Kabul.

During the ceremony, Biden appeared to jerk his left arm up and look down at his watch, which sparked backlash from veterans and conservative commentators.

But Biden's faux pas also echoes other similar incidents involving past U.S. presidents - Richard Nixon and George Bush Senior.

While on a presidential visit to Belgium in June 1974, Nixon had just finished attending a luncheon hosted by then-King Baudouin of Belgium.

Afterwards, Nixon went outside the Royal Palace in Brussels to greet the public, and walked along the front of a crowd of people shaking their hands one-by-one.

But as Nixon - followed closely his secret service security detail - shook one man's hand, he lifted his left arm up to check his watch, seemingly more concerned with keeping his busy schedule.



Pictured: Nixon checks his watch as he shakes hands with a member of the public in Brussels, 1974

It was in that precise moment a photographer snapped a picture of him, and within two months, Nixon had resigned as president following the Watergate scandal.

Some 18 years later, George Bush Senior was also caught out checking his watch multiple times during a presidential debate in 1992.

As a women from the audience started to ask him a direct question, Bush was caught on camera checking his watch and hoisting up his trousers.

Bush, the president at the time, would go on to lose the 1992 election to Bill Clinton, who he was competing against during the debate, along with independent candidate Ross Perot.



President George H.W. Bush looks at his watch during the 1992 presidential campaign debate