



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on December 28, 2023

The Motive for Haley's Civil War Question: To Prove That Republicans Are Bigots

Courtesy of an obvious plant for the Democrats or a GOP rival who appeared at Nikki Haley's recent town hall in Berlin, New Hampshire, the new gotcha question for GOP political candidates is this: "What caused the Civil War?"

And as Haley just learned, any answer but "slavery" will blow up like a plugged Confederate Howitzer at Vicksburg. And so the former South Carolina governor revised her remarks at another town hall. Why, yes, she said, "of course the Civil War was about slavery."

Well no, it wasn't, but no other answer is possible in post-[Floyd Hoax](#) America. And the point of such a question is for GOP candidates to prove they are sufficiently "anti-racist."

An incorrect answer proves quite the opposite.

The Question and Answers

Haley's initial answer was a rambling, libertarian non-answer.

"Well don't come with an easy question," Haley began. "I think the cause of the Civil War was basically how government was going to run. The freedoms and what people could and couldn't do."

She went downhill from there:

I think it always comes down to the role of government. And what the rights of the people are. And I will always stand by the fact that I think government was intended to secure the rights and freedoms of the people. It was never meant to be all things to all people. Government doesn't need to tell you how to live your life. They don't need to tell you what you can and can't do. They don't need to be a part of your life. They need to make sure that you have freedom. We need to have capitalism. We need to have economic freedom. We need to make sure we do all things so that individuals have the liberties, so that they can have freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to do or be anything they want to be without government getting in the way.

Haley's interlocutor was nonplussed. "In the year 2023, it's astonishing to me that you answer that question without mentioning the word 'slavery,'" [he said](#).

"What do you want me to say about slavery?" Haley replied.



AP Images
Nikki Haley



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The clip went viral. The damage was done. And Haley retreated.

“Of course the Civil War was about slavery,” she said at another town hall. “We know that. That’s unquestioned. Always the case.”

We don’t know that, it isn’t unquestioned, and it isn’t always the case, but let Historian Haley go on:

We know the Civil War was about slavery. But it was also more than that. It was about the freedoms of every individual. It was about the role of government. For 80 years, America had the decision and the moral question of whether slavery was a good thing, and whether government, economically, culturally, any other reasons, had a role to play in that. By the grace of God, we did the right thing and slavery is no more.

But the lessons of what that bigger issue with the Civil War are is that let’s not forget what came out of that, which is government’s role, individual liberties, freedom for every single person, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to do and be anything you want to be without anyone or government getting in your way. That should be the goal of what we always try and take away from that, right, because we never want to return back to that place. But we always want to remember the the lesson of what it means to be a free individual, and that everyone deserves to be a free individual.

So we stand by that. I say that as a Southerner. I say that as Southern governor who removed the Confederate flag off the statehouse grounds, and I say that as a proud American of how far we have come.

Traitor Joe Biden chimed in with one sentence over an X post of Haley’s video: “It was about slavery.”

That probably wasn’t the smart thing to say for a president from Delaware, a [slave state through](#) the Civil War, but anyway, the leftist media dutifully dashed off to Haley rival Ron DeSantis. He gave the right answer, and for good measure bumbled a customary Conservatism, Inc., talking point.

“Of course, you have the issue of slavery,” DeSantis said, noting that Southern states worried that President Lincoln would interfere with or eliminate it:

They viewed it as a states’ rights issue, not as a federal issue and they were concerned.... This Republican president may come in and get rid of the institution of slavery.... You know it’s interesting, because the Republican Party was founded to put a stop to the growth of slavery in this country. And the abolition of slavery was, to this day, remains the party’s top achievement. And it was a partisan achievement, because the people that were fighting Lincoln, the people that wanted to preserve [slavery] they were Democrats and so the Republican party did that. And that’s something that you should acknowledge and be proud of as a Republican.

What Lincoln Said

The unfortunate truth for Haley, DeSantis, and Traitor Joe is that Lincoln’s principal object in waging the brutal, unnecessary war [that killed](#) more than 600,000 Americans was *preserving the Union*. Or



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better yet, forcing the South to stay in it.

[Here is](#) Honest Abe in a letter to Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune*, who had complained that Lincoln had not announced Emancipation in 1862.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored the nearer the Union will be “the Union as it was.” If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. ***My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause.*** I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. [Emphasis added]

Ending slavery only became a war measure in 1863 when [Lincoln issued](#) the Emancipation Proclamation in the hope that slaves would rebel in the South. The proclamation, which also permitted Lincoln to disingenuously claim that the war’s object was ending slavery, [did not touch slavery](#) in the North, including, again, in Biden’s home state. [Lincoln was](#) a member of the American Colonization Society, wanted blacks shipped to Africa, and said so to a delegation of black leaders he met at the White House on August 14, 1862.

DeSantis omitted those facts in his *Democrats-are-the-real-racists* rendition of history.

As for Haley, “as a Southerner,” she bragged about removing the Confederate battle flag from the state capitol. Let us not debate the question of whether the daughter of [Punjabi Indian immigrants](#) is a real “Southerner,” and simply observe that anyone with a brain sees that remark as a cynical, desperate attempt to prove her “anti-racist” *bona fides*.

Which returns us to the original point. That seems to be what every GOP candidate — and indeed what *every Republican* — must prove in [post-Floyd Hoax America](#).

Problem is, no such proof is possible.



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