



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 19, 2019

Biden Gaffes Again, Praised “Segregationists,” But That Won’t End His Candidacy

Democratic presidential hopeful Joe Biden is in trouble for yet another verbal gaffe, this one involving a subject that had him in hot water in April.

Biden, the [New York Times](#) reported today, mentioned the good old days of “civility” when “segregationists” were in the Senate. [Weeks ago, CNN connected](#) Biden to “segregationists” with letters in which the former vice president opposed forced busing.



Because he isn’t a Republican, Biden will likely survive the latest politically incorrect misstep, which is less a commentary about Biden than it is about the state of the American media and politics.

Another Day, Another Gaffe

The latest goof, the [Times](#) reported, occurred when Biden was “defending himself ... against suggestions that he is too ‘old fashioned’ for today’s Democratic Party” and “invoked two Southern segregationist senators by name as he fondly recalled the ‘civility’ of the Senate in the 1970s and 1980s.”

Biden said Americans must “be able to reach consensus under our system,” and fondly recalled “his decades in the Senate as a time of relative comity.”

It wasn’t a “time of relative comity” when Biden’s Judiciary Committee savaged U.S. Supreme Court nominees [Robert Bork](#) and [Clarence Thomas](#), but that aside, “Biden noted that he served with the late Senators James O. Eastland of Mississippi and Herman Talmadge of Georgia, both Democrats who were staunch opponents of desegregation.”

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[Uh-oh:](#)

“I was in a caucus with James O. Eastland,” Mr. Biden said, slipping briefly into a Southern accent, according to a pool report from the fund-raiser. “He never called me ‘boy,’ he always called me ‘son.’”

He called Mr. Talmadge “one of the meanest guys I ever knew, you go down the list of all these guys.”

“Well guess what?” Mr. Biden continued. “At least there was some civility. We got things done. We didn’t agree on much of anything. We got things done. We got it finished. But today you look at the other side and you’re the enemy. Not the opposition, the enemy. We don’t talk to each other anymore.”

The [Times helpfully noted](#) that Eastland was a “plantation owner,” an obvious suggestion that he supported slavery, and opposed integration and was “a staunch critic of the civil rights movement,



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which he sometimes dismissed as the work of ‘Communists.’ Throughout his career he referred to African-Americans as members of an ‘inferior race’ and used the racist term ‘mongrelization.’”

In fact, communists did penetrate, manipulate, and to some extent control the civil rights movement, not least because of their [proximity to](#) Martin Luther King, Jr., but anyway, Talmadge too opposed the civil rights movement and the Supreme Court’s [Brown v. Board decision](#).

Yet Biden’s remarks in no way suggested he supported segregation, the [Times reported](#):

Mr. Biden made the comments about Mr. Eastland and Mr. Talmadge as he spoke about the need for unity, including a call for bipartisanship that has drawn derision from some liberals who don’t see room for compromise in today’s polarized Washington.

“I know the new New Left tells me that I’m — this is old-fashioned,” he said. “Well guess what? If we can’t reach a consensus in our system, what happens? It encourages and demands the abuse of power by a president.”

Amusingly, Biden’s remarks, the *Times* noted, occurred on the eve of [Juneteenth](#), the day on which blacks celebrate the end of slavery.

Candidacy Safe

In April, [CNN unearthed](#) letters Biden wrote to Eastland about forced busing, which Biden wanted to stop. Those letters didn’t slow Biden’s candidacy a bit, which is unsurprising given that liberal Democrats hold their leaders to different standards than those to which they hold conservative Republicans.

Case in point: Republican Senator Trent Lott.

In 2002, [Senate Republican Leader Trent Lott praised](#) Senator Strom Thurmond at Thurmond’s 100th birthday party. He said Thurmond would have made a good president if he had won the presidency in 1948, when he ran as a [Dixiecrat](#).

“I want to say this about my state: When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We’re proud of it,” Lott said. “And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn’t have had all these problems over all these years, either.”

The leftist media and its political allies attacked Lott because his kind remarks were an “implicit endorsement of segregation” as the [Times put it](#).

Unsurprisingly, [President Bush denounced](#) Lott, [who resigned](#) as minority leader a few weeks later.

But Biden’s remarks will not end his candidacy.

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