



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on June 17, 2020

Biden Once Said United Daughters of the Confederacy Are “Fine People”

President Donald Trump’s words in the aftermath of the 2017 Charlottesville protest have been twisted to assert that he called white nationalists and neo-Nazis “fine people,” but a 1993 tape of then-Senator Joe Biden of Delaware, now the almost-certain Democratic Party nominee for president to oppose Trump, is raising some eyebrows.



It is expected that Democrats will brush off the tape, in which Biden called members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) — an organization made up of female descendants of men who served in either the Confederate military forces or in its government — “fine people.” But, perhaps it will provide yet another opportunity to highlight the hypocrisy of those who nitpick every statement Trump makes, examining every comment, looking for any hint of racist views, while explaining away comments made by Biden or other leading Democrats.

Biden’s comments came during the 1993 confirmation hearing for Ruth Bader Ginsburg, while Biden was chairing the Senate Judiciary Committee. Biden referenced a speech by Senator Howell Heflin (D-Ala.), in which Heflin endorsed the effort of Senator Carol Moseley Braun (D-Ill.) to deny the UDC’s patent renewal on a Confederate flag design.

“I, too, heard that speech and, for the public listening to this, the senator made a very moving and eloquent speech, as a son of the Confederacy, acknowledging that it was time to change and yield to a position that Sen. Carol Moseley Braun raised on the Senate floor, not granting a federal charter to an organization made up of many fine people who continue to display the Confederate flag as a symbol.”

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“The charter would have given them the right, the imprimatur of the federal government to do that. It had nothing to do with the First Amendment, Judge, so don’t worry. But the senator made a very significant speech rivaled only, in my view, by a private speech given to me personally by a man whose office I now occupy, Senator John Stennis from Mississippi.”

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted to deny the UDC the patent renewal.

When the *New York Post* asked the Biden for President campaign for a response to the “fine people” remarks of Biden on the tape, Andrew Bates, a Biden campaign spokesman, noted a Biden tweet in which he wrote, “You don’t want to bring up the phrase ‘fine people’ in any context.”



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In that case, of course, Biden was criticizing Trump's comments after the 2017 protest in Charlottesville, Virginia, in which violence broke out between the competing protesters, and a woman died. When Biden opened his 2020 campaign for president, he made much of Trump's response to what happened at Charlottesville, using it as an example that "we are in a battle for the soul of the nation."

Since the Charlottesville protests, Trump's comments have been distorted multiple times, and we can expect that to continue. For example, columnist Donald Lambro, who initially made his name with a conservative book (*Fat City*) attacking the wasteful spending of the federal government but now makes almost every one of his columns a rant against Trump, said in a January opinion piece syndicated by the *Washington Times*, "When Trump was asked what he thought of the rally, he replied there were "some very fine people on both sides."

Lambro is not a person of low intelligence, so it is difficult to believe that this is simply an honest mistake. What Trump actually said was, "I'm not talking about the neo-Nazis and the white nationalists, because they should be condemned totally. But you had many people in that group other than the neo-Nazis and white nationalists, OK? And the press has treated them absolutely unfairly. Now, in the other group also, you had some fine people, but you also had troublemakers and you see them come with the black outfits and with the helmets and with the baseball bats. You've got — you had a lot of bad — you had a lot of bad people in the other group."

How anyone could take that as Trump praising white nationalists or neo-Nazis is unbelievable, yet a reporter at the time said he did not know what Trump was saying: "You were saying the press has treated white nationalists unfairly?"

Now, with Biden saying that members of the UDC are "fine people," will the mainstream media accuse Biden of harboring racist tendencies?

Not a chance.

Image: [Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons](#)

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