



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 4, 2019

Biden Questioned Busing, Desegregation, Said Democrats Needed “Liberal” George Wallace

Former Vice President Joe Biden might have a bigger problem than being an old white guy if he runs for president.

He’s an old white guy who has said some pretty bad things about race, not least of which was opposing desegregation and busing in the 1970s.

Even worse, he suggested that public schools in Iowa were better than those in Washington, D.C., because Iowa is mostly white and D.C. mostly black, and that his party needed a “liberal” George Wallace, the conservative Democrat who ran for president as a third party candidate in 1986 and won 46 electoral votes. Wallace, of course, was a staunch segregationist.



Given what’s happened to Republican conservatives for politically incorrect utterances, one must wonder: Can modern Democratic voters permit such a man to carry the party’s standard in 2020?

Desegregation Suggests that Blacks are Inferior

[The Daily Caller News Foundation unearthed comments](#) that put Biden squarely on the side of the past. So did the *Washington Examiner*.

Biden’s view of desegregation, DCNF noted, is “separate but equal.” *U.S. News and World Report* asked Biden whether busing did more harm than good. “Absolutely,” he replied. “Examining the concepts we used to rationalize busing six or seven years ago, they now seem to me to be profoundly racist.”

And “busing is harmful for several reasons,” he said:

First, busing, in effect, codifies the concept that a black is inferior to a white by saying, “The only way you can cut it educationally is if you’re with whites.” I think that’s a horrible concept. It implies that blacks have no reason to be proud of their inheritance and their own culture.

Second, busing violates the cardinal rule that the American people pose for their elected officials.... [T]he one thing they don’t expect, and won’t tolerate, is not using good old common sense. The reason, in my opinion, why there’s such a vociferous reaction to busing today in both black and white communities is that we’re not using common sense. Common sense says to the average American: “The idea that you make me part of a racial percentage instead of a person in a classroom is asinine.”

Then the young senator, perhaps unaware that holding such views would one day become cause for a nationwide moral panic — at least if a Republican made them — said desegregation itself would cause racism:



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I firmly believe the overwhelming majority of white people have no objection whatever to their child sitting with a black child.... But it makes no sense to them that they can't send their child to the school that's two blocks down the street.

And what this results in is heightened racial tension. You get whites saying: "I know why it's happening. It's those goldarned civil-rights people. It's those damn liberals." Then, after there's turmoil, with school days missed, teachers not showing up, it degenerates into: "It's those blacks."

[The Washington Examiner disinterred](#) an interview with NPR the same year on the same topic. Busing, Biden said, is a "a rejection of the whole movement of black pride."

Even worse, the the [Examiner reported](#), he told the *Philadelphia Enquirer* that his party needed more men like Wallace: "I think the Democratic Party could stand a liberal George Wallace, someone who's not afraid to stand up and offend people, someone who wouldn't pander but would say what the American people know in their gut is right."

In 2006, [Biden told](#) the editorial board of the *Washington Post*, when questioned why some school districts perform better than others, that "there's less than 1 percent of the population of Iowa that is African-American. There is probably less than 4 or 5 percent that are minorities. What is in Washington? So look, it goes back to what you start off with, what you're dealing with." Also in 2006, he said one needed "at least a slight Indian accent" to enter a 7-Eleven or Dunkin Donuts.

In a 2007 interview, Biden famously proclaimed 2008 primary opponent Barack Obama "the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy."

Can He Run?

The question is whether all these remarks mean his campaign is a nonstarter given the party's near maniacal obsession with race, and what has happened to Republicans for remarks that aren't nearly as inflammatory.

Weeks ago, Representative Steve King lost all his committee assignments after the [New York Times misquoted](#) him, but more to the point, Senator Trent Lott [was forced to resign](#) as majority leader because he said former segregationist Senator Strom Thurmond would have made a great president had he been elected in 1948.

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