

Does Joe Biden Really Know Jim Crow?

President Biden continues to claim that Republicans seeking to ensure election integrity in Georgia and 40 other states is “Jim Crow on steroids.” In fact, it appears to have become the Democrat mantra.

On June 14, we sent an email to you about H.R. 1/S. 1, the “For the People Act.” The legislation is not for the people; it’s for the power and is an attempt to begin the move to a one-party political system. That’s why the U.S. Senate Democrats are rushing to pass the legislation. It’s also why Texas Democrat legislators boarded a private plane to Washington, DC to stop a Republican-backed election integrity bill in Texas.

On July 5, we talked about the battle lines being drawn over state voting laws. Many states, including Pennsylvania, have begun to establish election integrity safeguards that protect both the right to vote and the accuracy of election results. On the other hand, the Democrats label these efforts voter suppression gimmicks designed to make it more difficult for minorities to vote. The truth is that Republicans are fighting to protect your vote.

Apparently, weekend voting, asking people to provide a driver’s license on an absentee ballot, and attempting to secure drop boxes are all “Jim Crow.” But that’s not surprising since Delaware, the President’s home state, is one of only five states that does not have in-person early voting or no-excuse absentee voting. Texas has more opportunities to vote than Joe Biden’s home state!

The bad-faith comparisons Biden is making are ridiculous. Not only is the president misleading the American people when he says this, but he is disrespecting black Americans whose ancestors endured legitimate discrimination at the hands of actual oppressive laws.

So who is Jim Crow?

Thomas Dartmouth Rice, a white man, was born in New York City in 1808. He devoted himself to the theater in his twenties, and in the early 1830s, he began performing the act that would make him famous: he painted his face black and did a song and dance he claimed were inspired by a slave he saw. The act was called “Jump, Jim Crow” (or “Jumping Jim Crow”).

“He would put on not only blackface makeup, but shabby dress that imitated in his mind—and white people’s minds of the time—the dress and aspect and demeanor of the southern enslaved black person,” said Eric Lott, author of *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (1992). Lott is a cultural historian and Distinguished Professor of English at The Graduate Center, CUNY in New York City.

As his popularity grew, his name seeped into the culture. ‘Jim Crow’ generally became shorthand for describing African Americans in this country.

Jim Crow Laws

Jim Crow laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation in the southern United States and elsewhere within the United States. These laws were enacted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by white Southern Democrat-dominated state legislatures to disenfranchise and remove political and economic gains made by black people during the Reconstruction period. Jim Crow laws were enforced until 1965.

In practice, Jim Crow laws mandated racial segregation in all public facilities in the states of the former Confederate States of America and in some others, beginning in the 1870s. Jim Crow laws were upheld in 1896 in the case of *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court laid out its “separate but equal”

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legal doctrine for facilities for African Americans. Moreover, public education had essentially been segregated since its establishment in most of the South after the Civil War in 1861–65.

The legal principle of "separate but equal" racial segregation was extended to public facilities and transportation, including the coaches of interstate trains and buses. Facilities for African Americans were consistently inferior and underfunded compared to facilities for white Americans; sometimes, there were no facilities for the black community at all. As a body of law, Jim Crow institutionalized economic, educational, and social disadvantages for many African Americans living in the United States.

Jim Crow laws and Jim Crow state constitutional provisions mandated the segregation of public schools, public places, and public transportation, and the segregation of restrooms, restaurants, and drinking fountains between white and black people. The U.S. military was already segregated. President Woodrow Wilson (D) initiated the segregation of federal workplaces in 1913.

In 1954, segregation of public schools (state-sponsored) was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren in the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education*. In some states, it took many years to implement this decision, while the Warren Court continued to rule against the Jim Crow laws in other cases such as *Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States* (1964). Generally, the remaining Jim Crow laws were overruled by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Democrats & Jim Crow

At the time of the Civil War, all slaveholders were Democrats, or at least no one has found an exception yet. It was the Democratic Party that was the party of Jim Crow. Although the KKK was not officially aligned with the Democrats, it consisted of white Democrats who terrorized both white and black Republicans (mostly black ones).

One of the rationales that some Democrats had for slavery was that blacks were unable to take care of themselves, so slavery was actually good for them. This attitude sounds reprehensible today; however, many Democrats still treat blacks as if they are unable to stand on their own and require a dependence on government.

Today, some Democrats will say that the Democratic Party of today isn't the same as it was back then. True; and the United States as a whole isn't the same as it was then either. Those who try to browbeat Americans over a history of slavery, the KKK, and Jim Crow really can't complain when it's pointed out that it was actually the Democratic Party that was most involved in this history.

As we see time and again, many Democrats, like our president, try to pin their own party's racist past on Republicans. But that isn't supported by evidence. It's true that many white Southern Democrats switched parties from Democrat to Republican and that most black Americans have switched parties from Republican to Democrat. However, the white Southern Democrats who switched to Republican did so as they also became increasingly less racist. The Republican Party has never championed slavery nor Jim Crow laws; the Democratic Party did.

Sources: The Social Justice Warrior, The Federalist, History.com