

Biden buries biggest diversity debacle in American education history - Using schools to forcibly remake society

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Two weeks ago, President Biden whooped up the 70th anniversary of a landmark Supreme Court decision in a speech at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. In an effort to bolster his flagging support from Black voters, Mr. Biden ignored the biggest education debacle of the past half century while hustling a scheme to raze the remnants of American childhood.



In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that “separate but equal” systems that intentionally segregated students by race violated the 14th Amendment. That decision resulted in profound changes in Southern states that had created parallel but inferior school systems for Blacks, along with other barriers to learning.

In his speech, Mr. Biden sniped at Republicans and conservatives, declaring, “We have a whole group of people out there trying ... to erase history.”

But the biggest erasure involves the largest diversity, equity and inclusion crusade in American history: the forced busing that ravaged schools in many metropolitan areas from the 1970s onward.

After its *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, the Supreme Court began rubber-stamping court decrees that compelled busing children far from home to satisfy constantly changing demands for racial balance in classrooms. Localities and school systems with no history of intentional racial discrimination were commandeered by federal judges who made themselves tinhorn dictators to control every aspect of the classrooms.

Forced busing was often the equivalent of throwing a bomb into a classroom. In Boston, the National Guard was called in to deal with violence after a federal judge compelled busing between a poor Black neighborhood and a working-class Irish neighborhood. Students had to wake up long before dawn to catch buses and lost the chance to participate in extracurricular activities in schools far from home.

The attempt to inflict racial harmony with an iron fist was a disaster far and wide. Forced busing turned children into political cannon fodder. It resulted in White flight that left many school systems more segregated than before forced busing began.

The Supreme Court ludicrously presumed that Black children needed White classmates to learn. But some all-Black schools, such as Dunbar High School in Washington, had been paragons of excellence since the Reconstruction era. Justice Clarence Thomas groused in 1995, “It never ceases to amaze me that the courts are so willing to assume that anything that is predominantly Black must be inferior.”

Mr. Biden denounced forced busing in 1977 as a “bankrupt concept,” but he probably forgot long ago that he opposed the policy.

The Supreme Court’s 1954 decision was partly spurred by the achievement gap between Black and White students, which narrowed in the subsequent decades. Since 2001, the federal government has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on policies to close the achievement gap, including No Child Left Behind and Common Core. But the racial achievement gap “is now 30 percent larger than it was 35 years ago,” according to Stanford University education professor Linda Darling-Hammond. Mr. Biden worsened that gap by approving perpetuating unjustifiable school shutdowns as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold.

According to progressives, the achievement gap proves that politicians need bigger iron fists to forcibly level children’s minds. Mr. Biden is trumpeting a policy to make forced busing look like a Sunday saunter in the park.

In his speech two weeks ago, Mr. Biden said he wants to “make sure preschool is universal [i.e., mandatory] for every three- and four-year-old in America” to reduce the prekindergarten achievement gap. In the name of equalizing racial test scores, the government would obliterate another huge swath of American family life. Why not go full East German and formally declare that the state owns the children?

Tennessee ran a massive test of pre-K for low-income families and discovered that it harmed the children. Children were twice as likely to be diagnosed with learning disabilities and had lower grades and far more behavioral problems than a control group. Forcing young children to prematurely attend academic classes may have “caused children to develop a hatred and rebellious attitude toward school,” researcher Peter Gray wrote in *Psychology Today*.

Would this scheme narrow the achievement gap by stupefying kids’ minds, producing a mental wasteland that only a social scientist or deranged progressive would cheer? Regardless, corralling and embittering millions of youngsters is a small price for providing free day care for single mothers who vote reliably for Democrats.

As his reelection campaign flounders, Mr. Biden will likely become more desperate and demagogic. How far will he pander to placate left-wing zealots who want to use schools to forcibly remake society? Americans should distrust any politician who denies the education debacles already committed in the name of equality.

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