

Hillary's America: The Secret History of the Democratic Party

Dinesh D'Souza

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On the surface, history appears to be nothing more than a cycle of action-reaction, of waves endlessly washing upon a shore. To fully grasp history and to learn from it, one needs to go beyond the cycle and examine the people creating the waves. Thus, personalities and backgrounds are crucial elements in a complete understanding of history. What would history be like if someone else made the crucial decision? For example, during the Versailles Peace Conference following World War I, Japan raised a proposal to include a racial equality amendment to the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Conference Chairman, US President Woodrow Wilson, rejected such an amendment. Why did Wilson reject Japan's proposal? President Harry Truman ordered the atomic bombing of Japan despite serious reservations from his advisors and American government knowledge that Japan was actively seeking to terminate hostilities. Defenders of Truman's use of nuclear weapons state that he merely wished to end the war, but what really motivated him? Both Wilson and Truman, elected to the highest public office in the United States, were members of the Democratic Party. Is it possible that their actions were shaped in part by the history and philosophy of the Democratic Party?

Author, filmmaker and political commentator Dinesh D'Souza suggests that this could have indeed been the case. Recently, the Democrats and their "progressive" allies have been particularly strident in condemning the maltreatment of the American Indians and Black slavery, chastising "White Americans" for the former and "the South" for the latter. Upon closer examination, however, D'Souza states that responsibility for these ills rests squarely on the shoulders of the Democratic Party. D'Souza dismisses the popular notion that the Democratic Party is the party of the "common man," of "racial equality, social justice, and equal opportunity," and asserts that the Democratic Party, from its founding, is the party of "exploitation, murder, and plunder" and "white supremacy".

Readers of the current book learn that the father of the Democratic Party is Andrew Jackson, then known as the "common man's president." Prior to becoming president, Jackson "and his cronies" obtained American Indian territory through force, threats and intimidation, selling the land to poor White settlers for a tidy profit. The land Jackson obtained through his chicanery would eventually become five southern states. In gratitude, White settlers put Jackson in the White House in 1828 and 1832, vowing their political support to the Democrats. As president, Jackson signed legislation ordering Indians to move west of the Mississippi River, despite previous US treaties that guaranteed protection. For Indians who were unable to move, they were "rounded up in internment camps" in a "policy reminiscent of the Japanese interments that a later Democratic administration would enforce during World War II." The book states that

White settlers quickly bought up the now vacant lands, further enriching Jackson “and his cronies.” For his “land stealing,” Jackson was “immensely popular with ordinary people. Jackson’s treatment of the Indians marked the “beginning of a long subsequent Democratic Party history of dispossession, cruelty, bigotry, and theft,” and his “proteges dominated the Democratic Party ... until the Civil War.”

D’Souza goes on to show that the Democratic Party was the “party of slavery,” a party that did everything it could to protect Black slavery in states where it was allowed and to spread it into new American states. The support base of the Democratic Party comprised of slave owners and those who saw slavery as a “natural and normal condition of society.” D’Souza points out that northern Democrats also supported slavery, dispelling the mistaken notion that only “southerners” supported slavery. Pro-slavery supporters said that slaves were fed, housed and otherwise taken care of--thus, slavery was “a blessing to the slave and a blessing to the master.” (In 1858, Republican US Senate candidate Abraham Lincoln derided slavery, a system wherein “you work and I eat, you toil and I will enjoy the fruits of it.”)

D’Souza suggests that it is no coincidence that the modern welfare state envisioned by the Democratic Party reflects the “plantations” of the 19th century South—the state (or “master”) should be responsible for its citizens’ well being. It was the Jackson Administration that gave poor Whites access to cheap land on which to build their homes. Slavery was seen as a “positive good,” as it took care of the needs of Blacks from cradle to grave in exchange for their labor—every plantation was a “little community, with the master as its head...”.

With the abolition of slavery following the Civil War, D’Souza states that the Democrats utilized “white supremacy” to amass White support in former slave states—“it was an essential part of the Democratic Party’s strategy.” Since Democrats still held political power in the South, Democrats placed legal obstacles that prevented former slaves from fully utilizing their legal rights and backing the Republicans. Indeed, D’Souza notes, it was the Republicans who were overwhelmingly against slavery before the Civil War and after the Civil War, Republicans enacted Constitutional Amendments that outlawed slavery and gave freed Blacks full legal rights as American citizens, including the right to vote. While the Democrats ruled a racially segregated South from the “1870s to the 1930s” the rest of the country was mostly Republican, winning “most presidential elections from 1865 through the 1920s.”

One can now view President Wilson’s and President Truman in light of the history of the Democratic Party. While the Democratic Party may not be the origin of their views, both men did grow up in the Democratic South and were apparently very compatible with other Democrats. One could speculate that by the time these men were able to chose, they fell in with the Democratic Party as the party’s philosophy was entirely compatible with their own. Given today’s politically correct social climate, retelling of Wilson’s and Truman’s sordid pasts, as told by D’Souza, will never be found in any grade school history textbook.

For example, in 1915, President Woodrow Wilson held a screening of the film *The Birth of a Nation* at the White House for cabinet members and invited guests. The film portrayed the Ku Klux Klan, characterized by D'Souza as the "terrorist wing" of the Democratic Party, as "heroes," taking on northern "carpetbaggers" and "protecting the honor of the South." The film paraphrased from Wilson's *A History of the American People* and drew from it as a reference source. While the Klan was depicted as heroic saviors of the White race, its real work involved terrorizing Blacks, preventing them from exercising their political rights. As to the claim by D'Souza that the Klan was the "terrorist wing" of the Democratic Party, he notes that "every prominent leader [of the Klan] was a Democrat."

In keeping with the Democratic Party's white supremacist policy, candidate Wilson in 1912 stated that he opposed Chinese and Japanese immigration because, he believed, they were unassimilable: "We cannot make a homo-geneous population out of people who do not blend with the Caucasian race... Oriental coolieism will give us another race problem to solve, and surely we have had our lesson." As president, Wilson "mandated segregation for all the agencies in the federal government." In defense of this, Wilson stated that "segregation was in fact beneficial for blacks." It should be noted that future president Franklin D. Roosevelt, serving as Secretary of the Navy in Wilson's cabinet, "never objecting to the *de jure* segregation that Wilson had imposed..."

D'Souza further adds that Wilson espoused a belief in a racial hierarchy, that some races were more "evolved" than others. For example, he considered "Orientals" an advanced race, but this group had "degenerated, basically lowering them into the black and brown category," which, to Wilson, were lower than Whites. By viewing Wilson's background and thinking on race, we can understand why he rejected any thought of "racial equality" as proposed by Japan.

It was ultimately President Harry Truman's decision to use nuclear weapons against Japan. Truman made his decision on July 25, 1945 and first and foremost, his biographers have noted, was his desire to force Japan to capitulate. The current book does not explore the possibility that Truman's racist attitudes played a key role in his decision to use nuclear weapons against Japan. However, upon noting Truman's background, one could say that use of a weapon with unimaginable destructive force against a non-White enemy came as an easy decision to him. Had nuclear weapons been developed a year earlier, would Truman have ordered Berlin be reduced to radioactive rubble?

Truman's upbringing could have been explored in more depth by D'Souza. Elsewhere, it is noted that Truman freely admitted that "I was raised amidst some violently prejudiced Southerners."¹ Truman's younger brother and sister declared their distain of "niggers" and Harry "shared this outlook." He took a dim view of nonwhites as he wrote in a June 22, 1911 letter to his future wife Bess Wallace: "I think one man is just as good as another so long as he's honest and decent and not a nigger or a Chinaman. Uncle Wills says that the Lord made a white man from dust, a nigger from mud, and then threw what

¹ Leuchtenburg, W.E. (2005). *The White House Looks South*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press.

was left and it came down a Chinaman. He does hate Chinese and Japs. So do I. It is race prejudice I guess. But I am strongly of the opinion that negroes ought to be in Africa, yellow men in Asia, and white men in Europe and America.” Bess shared in his disapproval of being in the company of non-Whites, stating that “blacks should have their schools and we should have ours.”

Truman’s views on Blacks persisted through out his tenure as President. However, he did sign an executive order in 1948 to desegregate the US armed forces. (In 1948, Truman faced a presidential election.) Nonetheless, American military units remained segregated up until the Korean War. Rather than Truman’s order, the need for manpower during the war forced the military to integrate Blacks into White units. Truman’s view on the Chinese may have shifted a little over time. While visiting San Francisco’s Chinatown in 1944, Truman supposedly stated that “those Chinese are wonderful, they are the only colored people I trust.”

Truman’s exact feelings toward the Japanese during his tenure in office are not entirely clear, but he likely considered them “subhuman” and that “the only good Japanese was a dead one” as most Americans did during World War II. His former boss, Franklin D. Roosevelt, had no need for the Japanese race.² Truman referred to them as “beasts” following the dropping of the atomic bombs. Truman’s “white supremacist” views are in fact aligned with that of his party and they do not appear to have hinder his decision to vaporize non-White cities with nuclear weapons.

The current book describes history and role of the Republicans as a counterbalance to the “racist Democrats”. As the current book was written in 2016 and released before the 2016 US presidential election, one could imagine that the main purpose of the book was to cast the Democrats and its presidential candidate in the worst possible light. Whether readers were swayed by D’Souza’s portrayals on Election Day is not known. Equally important is whether D’Souza’s findings will resonate beyond 2016.

Nonetheless, the main value of the current book is its unflinching depiction of the history of the Democratic Party, a history that has been, as D’Souza puts it, “whitewashed,” and deserves wide attention, internationally and domestically as well. A limitation of the current book is that D’Souza restricts the sociopolitical effects of Democratic thinking to the US and does not survey the Democratic Party’s feelings for non-Whites at the

² While FDR in “Shall We Trust Japan?” (*Asia*, July 1923) wrote approvingly of the Japanese, stating that they were a “race ... of acknowledged dignity and integrity,” and hoped that the US and Japan would find common grounds for cooperation, he opposed Japanese immigration into the US: “So far as Americans are concerned, it must be admitted that, as a whole, they honestly believe—and in this belief they are at one with the people of Australasia and Canada—that the mingling of white with oriental blood on an extensive scale is harmful to our future citizenship...As a corollary of this conviction, Americans object to the holding of large amounts of real property, of land, by aliens or those descended from mixed marriages. Frankly, they do not want non-assimilable immigrants as citizens, nor do they desire any extensive proprietorship of land without citizenship.” Roosevelt, in justifying his position, asserts that the Japanese were of like mind (Robinson, G. (2001). *By Order of the President*. Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press). During the war, FDR inquired about the possibility of “solving the Japanese problem” by forcing the Japanese to interbreed with other Asian groups (Robinson, G. (2012) *After Camp: Portraits in Midcentury Japanese Life and Politics*, Oakland, CA: University of California Press).

international level. Since a number of crucial interactions between Japan and the US occurred under Democratic leadership, to predict the outcome of future interactions between Japan and American Democrats, it is imperative to get a true accounting of their beliefs, which form the basis of their behavior. Conversely, what kind of treatment could Japan expect from Republicans? What do Republicans believe?

D'Souza makes the Republicans the heroes of the current book, but it is not entirely clear what their attitudes are to non-Whites. While US House Democrats overwhelmingly supported the 2007 "Comfort Women" Resolution, Senator Daniel Inouye, a Democrat, urged restraint on the issue. Many Republicans, such as Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, then ranking Republican member in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, took the Democrat's cue and chastised Japan, demanding that they "apologize". Then there are Republicans such as Dana Rohrabacher. He wondered aloud if there was any merit in supporting the resolution, as he characterized Japan as a "reliable security partner of the US" and commended the Japanese government for its "role in enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific Region". In the end, however, Rohrabacher voted in favor of the Resolution. Then there are other Republicans, such as Representatives Ron Paul and Thomas Tancredo, who criticized their fellow representatives for forcing Japan to perpetually apologize for something that the current generation of Japanese had no responsibility and for picking sides in what is essentially a political issue between Japan and Korea. (Paul and Tancredo voted against the Resolution.) It would not be wise to assume that all Republicans will come to the aid of Japan on historical issues or that all Democrats will condemn Japan for taking the "wrong interpretation" of history. However, in Japan, there is a lack of understanding of the distinction between the two major American political parties and perhaps greater understanding of the history of these American political parties will lead to better understanding of their behavior. D'Souza's book is a step in this direction.