

BIDEN WANTS REPARATIONS FOR AFRICA

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on reparations for African nations:

President Joe Biden recently said he wants Congress to write a check to African nations to the tune of \$55 billion. Why? “We remember the stolen men and women and children who were brought to our shores in chains, subjected to unimaginable cruelty. My nation’s original sin was that period.”

Biden is factually wrong. He made four errors.

1. The slaves taken from Africa were not “stolen”— they were bought by Europeans from their African slavemasters.
2. Children were rarely taken: most of the slaves were men.
3. Most slaves were not subjected to “unimaginable cruelty.” This was not because the slavemasters were kind: it was because they wanted their slaves to be healthy. The worst thing they did to their slaves was non-violent: they denied them the right to keep some of their bounty, which would have allowed them to develop a work ethic. As for the cruelty, more Irish died on the ships to the New World than Africans, and that is because they were not slated to be slaves—so they were expendable.
4. Slavery is not our original sin. As Harvard scholar Orlando Patterson has detailed, it is one of the most common institutions in the history of the world. In fact, there is not a place on earth that has not had slavery at one time or another.

Here are some more facts about slavery that Biden doesn’t know.

As black economist Thomas Sowell has noted, slavery was never an issue anywhere in the world until the 18th century, and that was when the leaders in Western civilization started to condemn it. "You could research all of the 18th century Africa or Asia or the Middle East without finding any comparable rejection of slavery there."

Sowell also maintains that "Just as Europeans enslaved Africans, North Africans enslaved Europeans—more Europeans than there were Africans enslaved in the United States or in the 13 colonies from which the nation was formed."

A CNN report on slavery found that "For centuries along the West African coast, millions of Africans were sold into slavery and shipped across the Atlantic to the Americas. The middlemen were European slave traders based in forts like Ghana's Cape Coast Castle..."

Researcher Akosua Perbi of the University of Ghana concluded that "It was the Africans themselves who were enslaving their fellow Africans, sending them to the coast to be shipped outside."

In September, CNN's Don Lemon interviewed Hilary Fordwich, an English commentator and business consultant. Lemon contended that the English are immensely wealthy and that they should pay reparations for enslaving Africans. He said as much as \$100 billion should be paid.

Fordwich did not disagree that reparations should be made, only that it is important to note who started the slavery supply chain.

"Where was the beginning of the supply chain? That was in Africa." She pointedly said, "The first nation in the world to abolish it [slavery]—it was started by William Wilberforce, was the British. In Great Britain, they abolished slavery. Why? Because the African kings were rounding up their own people. They had them in cages waiting in the beaches. No one

was running into Africa to get them.”

“And you’re totally right. If reparations need to be paid, we need to go right back to the beginning of that supply chain and say, who was rounding up their own people and having them handcuffed in cages. Absolutely. That’s where they should start.”

Lemon was dumbfounded. He simply said, “It’s an interesting discussion, Hilary. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. We’ll continue to discuss.”

One more thing. Instead of worrying how much cash people should get for a condition they never endured, shouldn’t we be concerned with modern-day slavery?

Slavery is widespread today, though it is not well reported. The countries with the most slaves are India, China and North Korea. In terms of the highest prevalence per 1000 residents, the top three are North Korea, Eritrea and Burundi; of the top ten, half are African nations.

This raises the question: Who should pay whom for atrocities occurring in real time? It would be great if Joe Biden weighed in.