

# Remnants of the Confederacy glorifying a time of tyranny

By JONATHAN DAVID FARLEY

A friend of mine told me that, whenever he drives by the statue of Civil War general Nathan Forrest on Interstate 65, he always salutes it. With his middle finger.

Nathan Forrest, as you'll recall, is the Confederate "hero" who founded the Ku Klux Klan.

Today, 137 years after the last shot was fired in the Civil War, the enemy regrouped. Under pressure from students, Vanderbilt University dropped the word "Confederate" from the name of its "Confederate Memorial Hall." The United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), which contributed \$50,000 towards the construction of the building, promptly sued Vanderbilt to get their money back.

Just who are the Daughters of the Confederacy? In 1931, Nashville Chapter No. 1 "voted to see that the last meeting place of the Ku Klux Klan in Nashville ... [was] suitably marked." In 1944 and 1966, the UDC's minutes record their opposition to integration. More recently, a Murfreesboro woman, whose family belongs to the UDC wrote me to say that Martin Luther King's "only contribution [was] to stir up more prejudice and being killed."

Lest we forget, the Confederacy aimed to destroy the United States. Every Confederate soldier, by the mores of his age and ours, deserved not a hallowed resting place at the end of his

days but a reservation at the end of the gallows. The UDC honors traitors.

"But the war was not about slavery," they whine. "It was about states' rights." But the "right" Confederates sought to defend was the right to murder, rape, and torture millions of Africans, with impunity.

Here is how one slave owner exercised his "rights": "Through a period of four months, including the latter stages of pregnancy, delivery, and recent recovery therefrom ... he beat [his slave] with clubs, iron chains and other deadly weapons time after time, burnt her, inflicted stripes over and over, with scourges."

The Confederacy's own vice president, Alexander Stephens, declared that the Confederacy "rests upon the great truth that the negro is not the equal of the white man, that slavery — the subordination to the superior race — is his natural and normal condition."

Today's Confederates, who deny that the war was about slavery, are the new holocaust revisionists.

Black Americans and white Europeans object to the statue of a 19th century Hitler standing in public view off an interstate highway. It and the Confederate flags surrounding it represent nothing less than a death threat against scores of millions of people of color. That monument must go. Not only because it's racist and violent but also

because it's just plain ugly.

The issue is not black vs. white.

The mostly white Green Party of the United States has issued a statement supporting Vanderbilt's decision. Southerners black and white recoil with disgust when the UDC claims that it alone represents "Southern heritage."

Here in Nashville, there are plans to investigate the source of the UDC's funds. If researchers can trace them back to slavery, they will demand that reparations be paid to the true children of the Confederacy — the descendants of the slaves — before one cent is paid by Vanderbilt back to the UDC.

Indeed, the race problems that wrack America to this day are due largely to the fact that the Confederacy was not thoroughly destroyed, its leaders and soldiers executed and their lands given to the landless freed slaves.

The Daughters of the Confederacy say we must remember their dead. And I agree: Let us remember the cruelty inflicted upon helpless women and children by cowards masquerading as civilized men.

The tyranny and evil they visited upon millions must never be forgotten. ■

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