

**STEPHEN M. KAHNERT**

*U.S. citizen and voting since February 26, 1997*  
931 S. Broadway Avenue Park Ridge IL 60068

Monday June 23, 2015

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley  
Office of the Governor  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Thank you, Governor.  
Stephen  
and sons.

I can no longer keep the attached Confederate battle flag in my home, even as a teaching tool about our history with my youngest sons Emmett, 12, and Liam, 9.

A murdering South Carolinian racist last Wednesday desecrated the flag that flies today on your Statehouse lawn, nine of its 13 stars shot through.

He has hijacked whatever historic value was still in that 150-year-old emblem, whatever honor was still imbued in it by Jackson and Lee at Chancellorsville. That South Carolina terrorist hijacked it the same way a former artist named Adolf hijacked an honorable insignia, bastardizing it to create his Nazi swastika.

Any of us who now sees a swastika cannot help but think of Auschwitz. Any of us who now sees a Confederate battle flag cannot expunge the memory of the Emanuel Church nine, assassinated with their Bibles and their hearts open.

Across the years, Governor, I have remained fascinated at the valor and sacrifice and leadership shown during 1861-1865. As our Civil War sesquicentennial started I wondered what we might celebrate about leadership after April 9, 1865. So, I sent off the proposal on the reverse to the current president of St. Thomas University in Houston, a former Commandant of the Army War College.

Perhaps focusing on what former adversaries did to educate and to inspire post-Civil War citizens is a project for you to consider ... initiatives of healing and hope. Let me know if I can be of help.

But, please retire that Confederate battle flag soon. Hopefully well before our nation marks another December anniversary of the Newtown massacre.

Respectfully,