

Regarding the recent Confederate flag flap, resurrected yet once again by the Progressives who saw an opportunity following the Charleston murders to promote division, such would not even exist if the American citizenry understood history. To many, the flag represents slavery and hatred. Here are some facts.

First, even a cursory examination of the causes of the American Civil War immediately exclude slavery as a provocation for that conflict. The North fought to preserve the Union. Only 10% of Northerners considered themselves abolitionists (whom Lincoln abhorred, by the way). "Slavery" was not even brought up until two years into the war. That was when the Emancipation Proclamation, a document of propaganda and military strategy, was signed. Note that there were over 1,000,000 slaves in the Northern states (flying the U.S. flag) that were unaffected by that document and remained in slavery. The South fought to separate itself from a federal government which was destroying the Southern agrarian economy through Northern industrial tariffs and attempting to pass laws which would eradicate balanced representation in Congress.

Had the South not seceded, slavery would have continued to flourish in the U.S. by law, with the blessings of the Supreme Court, until the inventions of John Deere and the evolution of Christianity put an end to it. Even after the states began to secede, the U.S. Congress began to pass an amendment guaranteeing that the institution would be left unmolested if only the Confederate states would return to the Union. The South refused the proposal. Ergo, the Civil War was not fought to either abolish slavery nor to maintain slavery and the Confederate flag was not a symbol of slavery, but independence.

Secondly, the idea that the Confederate flag represents slavery is absurd when one considers that no slave ship ever flew that flag. Those ships were under the standards of the United States of America and several European countries. Further, slavery only existed under the Confederate flag for a little over four years. It existed for over 70 years under Old Glory and before that almost 300 years under the flags of Britain, Spain and France. Yet, none of these are ostracized. If a flag were to be hated, it should be that of Nigeria, the country in which slaves were captured and sold by their own countrymen.

The KKK, militia groups and white supremacists have used the Confederate battle flag. But they also use the U.S. flag and the Christian cross. No one wants to ban those symbols. Extremist and hate groups can use whatever symbol they wish. That does not make the symbol evil. Free blacks in the South owned over 60,000 black slaves and supported the Confederacy and their flag. Certainly they did not hate blacks.

For the millions of Southerners (and Northerners) whose ancestors fought for the CSA, the flag is a matter of pride and heritage. For it to be removed due to the hypocritical and blatantly false propaganda to promote a misguided and warped agenda is simply wrong.

Garry Bowers [19 Lilac Lane, Montgomery, AL 36109]