



Confederate Flag Controversy May Be Just the First Battle

Almost immediately after last week's killing by Dylann Roof of nine members of the congregation of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., the tragedy was already being utilized for political purposes.

In the words of former Obama aide Rahm Emanuel, those on the Left "never let a serious crisis go to waste."

There were the predictable denunciations of "easy access" to guns from President Obama, while others issued calls for better monitoring of the criminally insane. But after it was revealed that Roof was a dedicated white racist whose goal in the shootings was to spark a race war, some seized upon the Confederate "battle" flag as somehow the cause of the murders.

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Such a response, however, was emotional rather than rational.

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), now a candidate for president, agreed with Governor Nikki Haley's call to take down the Confederate flag from the grounds of the South Carolina Capitol. "I hope that, by removing the flag, we can take another step towards healing and recognition — and a sign that South Carolina is moving forward," he asserted.

But would removal of the Confederate flag from public places of prominence (such as the South Carolina Capitol ground) satisfy those who say it is an offensive racist symbol? Many, of course, want to relegate the Confederate flag to the trashbin of history. But if that happens, then what? Would that satisfy progressive leftists, or would they simply move beyond the current Confederate flag flap to other battlegrounds?

Leftist activists are already targeting Confederate Civil War monuments all over the South, including the monument to General Robert E. Lee in New Orleans. Could army posts across the South — such as Fort Bragg in North Carolina, named after a Confederate general — be renamed? Predictably, politicians are among the first to

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buckle to political correctness. Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky is leading the effort to remove a statue of Confederate President Jefferson Davis (born in Kentucky) from the statehouse rotunda. And University of Texas officials have announced that a panel of students and faculty are meeting to determine the future of a Jefferson Davis statue on the Austin campus.

CSMonitor.com noted that the push to remove anything Confederate from state and federal land is “facing a backlash,” with many Americans viewing the efforts to tear down Confederate flags and monuments as “akin to historical revision, more appropriate to the Soviet Union under Stalin.” Even a northern historian, Matthew Guterl of Brown University in Rhode Island, noted that the South is being used as a racial scapegoat. “This idea that the South is this backwards, Medieval landscape, and racially terrible — all of that stuff is complete hogwash,” he observed, adding that the demonizing of the South is “political.”

Radio commentator Rush Limbaugh theorized on his program that the push against the Confederate flag was part of “an effort to marginalize the Republican electoral strength in the South.” He argued that the flag was not really the issue; rather, it was “really an attempt to segregate and isolate the entire South and to [quote Saul] Alinsky, you know, the [author of] *Rules for Radicals* — you seek the target, you isolate it, you attack it, you humiliate it.” The reason the Left hates the South so much, he noted, is because it is “the last remaining Republican electoral stronghold in terms of presidential politics.”

The next target, Limbaugh predicted, would be the U.S. flag, which he explained symbolized a country that those on the Left do not like. And he didn’t hold out much hope that Republican politicians would fight for the American flag when that attack comes.

In fact, the attack on the country’s flag has already begun. A group of university professors have circulated a letter in support of leftist students at the University of California-Irvine who want to ban the U.S. flag on their campus.

“U.S. nationalism often contributes to racism and xenophobia,” claimed a letter obtained by the website Campus Reform. Hundreds of left-wing professors from across the country signed the letter, commending the students for their “courage.” In a bow to cultural diversity, the U.C.-Irvine student government association recently voted 6-4 (with two abstentions) to remove the U.S. flag from a campus lobby. Breitbart quoted an unnamed student who said the student government association feared the flag might hurt the feelings of illegal aliens. The executive leadership of student government later vetoed the resolution — at least for now.

Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, denounced the U.S. flag this week at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Washington, D.C. He told the cheering audience of several hundred, “We need to put the American flag down. Because we’ve caught as much hell under that as the Confederate flag.” He asked, “Who are fighting today? It’s the people that carry the American flag.”

For years, our national anthem, *The Star-spangled Banner*, has endured criticism from the Left, with some labelling it a “war cry” and calling for something less martial, such as *America the Beautiful*. More dedicated leftists have even offered *This Land is Your Land*, composed by folk singer Woody Guthrie, who wrote a regular column for an official newspaper of the American Communist Party.

As Raven Clabough recently noted in *The New American*, “Defenders of the Confederate flag may note that demonizing something simply because people support it is a very slippery slope.” The Ku Klux Klan has certainly made use of the Confederate flag at its marches, but it is usually outnumbered by U.S. flags at their meetings. The Klan has also made use of the Christian cross.

One wonders when a movement will begin to demonize the cross seen atop many church buildings, because it offends those whose immoral actions the Bible condemns.

Leading merchants, including Walmart, Amazon, eBay, and Sears, have now announced that they will remove Confederate flag products from their shelves. Walmart spokesman Brian Nick even admitted, “We never want to

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offend anyone with the products we offer.”

Where does that desire not to offend anyone lead? The Bible itself says that the cross is an offense to those who do not believe in the Christian faith.

Lou Lumenick, a prominent movie critic with the *New York Post*, contends that the classic movie *Gone With the Wind* is nothing but “subtle racism” and should go the way of the Confederate flag.

But are the American people really prepared to ban anything that might possibly, to some extent, motivate a person to commit a wrong act?

Last year in Moore, Oklahoma, Alton Nolen was allegedly inspired by Islamic beheadings in the Middle East to behead a co-worker at the Vaughn Foods processing plant and attack another woman before he was arrested. He had posted a photo of himself with two “brothers” at a mosque in Oklahoma City. Does this mean that the Koran should be banned, or that mosques should be shut down?

Extremists have murdered abortionists, claiming to be motivated by their Christian faith. Should the Christian faith be thus considered suspect? Obviously not.

Many thousands of Americans display the Confederate flag on their automobiles or on flagpoles, but only one American entered a black church last week and murdered innocent members of the congregation engaged in Bible study.