



## Ole Miss Students Remove State Flag Incorporating Confederate Banner

University of Mississippi student senators voted on October 20 in favor of a resolution asking the university to remove the Mississippi state flag, which includes the Confederate battle flag as part of its design, from campus. The present design was first adopted in 1894.

Student senators of the Associated Student Body passed the resolution on a 33 to 15 vote, with one senator abstaining.

Among the allegations (each preceded by a “WHEREAS”) against the state flag that the students made in the resolution were:

- “the state flag of Mississippi is the only state flag in the nation that incorporates the Confederate battle flag in its design”;
- “the current Mississippi flag’s incorporation of the Confederate battle flag divides our campus and state;”
- “the presence of the symbol in question on UM’s campus undermines efforts to promote diversity and create a safe, tolerant academic environment for all students;”
- “the symbol in question violates the UM Creed, which calls for ‘respect for the dignity of each person. ;;;”

The resolution also stated: “an additional aspect of this resolution is to encourage the Mississippi legislature to hasten their pursuit of a new state flag.”

However, the resolution is just an advisory measure and now goes to the university’s senior officials, who will decide whether or not to implement the student body’s decision.

In its report about the incident, CNN observed:

Oxford [where the University is located] is a place where tradition is revered, and Confederate symbolism has long been important to the school’s image. Ole Miss athletic teams are called the Rebels, and until 2003, Colonel Reb was the university’s mascot. (In 2010, Rebel Black Bear was selected as the school’s mascot.)

CNN might also have mentioned that when the Civil War (often called “The War Between the States” in the South) began in 1861, classes at Ole Miss were suspended when the entire student body enlisted in the Confederate army. The students’ company, Company A, 11th Mississippi Infantry, was nicknamed the University Greys. The company suffered a 100 percent casualty rate during the war and when Ole Miss re-opened, only one member of the University Greys was able to visit the university to address the



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student body.

With a heritage such as this, it is strange that Old Miss's student body should demand the removal of — not the Confederate battle flag, itself — but the 121-year-old state flag from the school's campus. The University of Mississippi is, after all, part of the state university system.

The use of the old Confederate battle flag (which was not the national flag of the Confederacy) in the South has generated controversy in recent years. In 1988, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) launched a campaign to remove the flag from the state capitol buildings of South Carolina and Alabama, and to delete its design from the state flags of Georgia and Mississippi. Georgia's flag has been redesigned twice since then. In 2001, the large Confederate battle flag that occupied most of the flag was removed and a tiny version of it was incorporated in a banner that included small versions of some of Georgia's former flags, as well as colonial and current U.S. flags. When that design was replaced by the current Georgia flag in 2001, Mississippi became the only state with the battle flag included in its state flag.

The Confederate battle flag became a matter of emotion-induced controversy again in June, in the aftermath of tragic mass shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The shooter, Dylann Roof, had posted images of himself holding the Confederate flag in various images on his website, providing enemies of the flag and champions of political correctness with ammunition to revive and escalate the war against the flag. This was in addition to the expected outcry for more gun control, as always occurs after such shootings.

The first reaction against the flag occurred within South Carolina, as some lawmakers and residents called for its removal from the grounds in front of the state Capitol next to a monument honoring fallen Confederate soldiers. Capitulating to the tide of political correctness, many South Carolina politicians, including Governor Nikki Haley, U.S. Republican Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott, and other state political leaders, called for the historic flag's removal. The flag was removed from the Capitol grounds on July 10 and moved to the Relic Room of the South Carolina State Museum in Columbia.

As many commentators have observed, however, this issue was not only about a flag, but is part of a more widespread agenda aimed at eliminating images associated not only with the South's, but America's heritage. In an [article for \*The New American\*](#) posted on June 26, writer Steve Byas expressed doubts that the removal of the Confederate flag from public places would satisfy the progressive Leftists who have clamored for its removal.

Byas observed: "Leftist activists are already targeting Confederate Civil War monuments all over the South, including the monument to General Robert E. Lee in New Orleans."

The article quoted radio commentator Rush Limbaugh, who theorized on his program that the movement against the Confederate flag is part of "an effort to marginalize the Republican electoral strength in the South."

Limbaugh believes that the Confederate flag is not really the issue but the campaign against it is "really an attempt to segregate and isolate the entire South and to [quote Saul] Alinsky ... 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."

Which is absolutely correct. A Republican presidential candidate would find it next to impossible to win the White House without the electoral votes of Texas, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina — all former



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Confederate states.

Limbaugh predicted that the progressives' next target would be the U.S. flag, which he says symbolizes a country that those on the Left do not like. Furthermore, he is not optimistic that Republican politicians will fight for the American flag when that attack comes.

Before such an attack on the U.S. flag is likely to occur, however, we can expect continued assaults on vestiges of state sovereignty, which received mortal blows with the defeat of the southern states' failed attempt at secession and the subsequent passage of amendments to the Constitution that gave greater power to the federal government at the expense of the states. States' rights have always been an important hallmark of Southern politics, and the attacks on the old flags of the Confederacy and other vestiges of Southern heritage can be viewed as part of the attack on state sovereignty. The student senators at Ole Miss most likely lack the political sophistication to realize that they have become pawns in this process. The fact that the students' resolution did not merely remove the state flag from campus but also encouraged the Mississippi legislature "to hasten their pursuit of a new state flag," is one indication of where this movement is headed.

Flags are important symbols, which is why capturing an enemy's flag is deemed so critical in battle. An attack on Mississippi's state flag, which has a proud 121-year-old history, can be viewed as an attack on the state's sovereignty, as well.

*Photo of Mississippi state flag: AP Images*

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