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Street Reporter**



Uyless Black

Removal of Abe from America

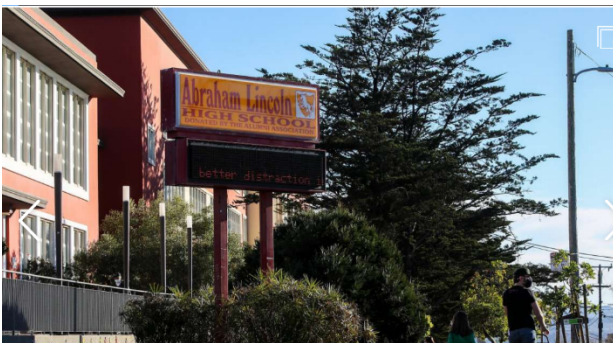
Removal of Abe from America¹

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Late last year, I posted on my blog an article about the possible removal of statues of historical figures from the U.S. Capitol grounds and other places around America. If you did not receive this report or have forgotten about it, go to Blog.UylessBlack.com. Scroll down to “16. Politics in America” and click the link. Next, click on “Statue of Limitations.”

Regarding that article, consider an excerpt published in several news media.

A San Francisco school district has decided to rename Abraham Lincoln High School because the president who abolished slavery didn't show that “black lives mattered” to him and failed to help Native Americans. A total of 44 sites will be renamed, including schools named after Thomas Jefferson and Paul Revere. Jeremiah Jefferies, chairman of the renaming committee, said only “only good can come from” getting rid of “problematic names.”² [See Figure below for the sign under question.]



Problematic names indeed. San Francisco's leaders are becoming problematic. I worked in San Francisco a few weeks each year for some twenty years, I grew attached to this beautiful urban gem. But in more recent times, the proclamations of its governmental bodies have taken me aback and made the city less attractive to me. Some of the government's decrees have taken many citizens aback.

It's a sad example of the ignorance of past times and not accepting the reality that times change and so do cultural norms. After reading a draft of this report, my wife, Holly, joked that with the election of our nation's new president and vice-president, perhaps America should remove all references to prior male vice-presidents because their existence implies women don't matter. The suggestions of the San Francisco renaming committee are equally infantile.

The reference cited above on my blog furnishes a link to a report about removing many statues around America. Although I express disagreement about statue removal of historical figures in general, I grant that some special circumstances exist in which they should have signs placed before them declaring why some people want them removed. I also offer: Leave all statues as they are, and erect other statues next to them that refute their implied meanings.

But renaming schools and other sites because Lincoln did not “show” that “black lives mattered” is not only emblematic of the ignorance of these supporters, it is also illustrative of more onerous movements of an extreme left autocracy that is gaining traction in America. The

¹ Thanks to Google for the photos in this article.

² <https://www.sfchronicle.com/local-politics/article/Abraham-Lincoln-was-once-a-hero-In-some-S-F-15798744.php>.

same trend also pertains to America's extreme right. For now, the focus is on the Dark Blues of America's body politic.

One of the most contentious issues with the people who want some statues removed is that some of the historical figures had slaves. From the quote above, I am certain that is the reason given for the removal of Thomas Jefferson statues.

Abraham Lincoln never owned slaves. His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, owned five slaves. Fine, tear down all the statues in America of Ms. Lincoln.

But do not tear down the statues of a man who was the most influential person on earth to free the blacks in America from slavery.

Do not remove the statues of a man who was the most significant and powerful proponent of getting the 13th Amendment passed in Congress, the law that abolished slavery.

Do not remove the statues of a man who is the father of the Emancipation Proclamation, which resulted in more than 3.5 million African Americans in the Confederate states being declared as free.

Do not remove the statues of a man, who in the Gettysburg address said: "...that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." The "new birth of freedom" was not just for the white nation, it was for the black nation as well.

Why did these people not insist on the removal of George Washington's name from schools, street signs, and millions of other American things? After all, Washington had several hundred slaves.

Why not tear down the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial? While we are at it, get rid of Mt. Vernon and Monticello.

For that matter, rename the White House, it's too white. Forbid children building snowmen, they're also white. Get rid of this writer's name, he is not black enough.

My absurdities are no more ridiculous than the removal of Abraham Lincoln from the name of a school. All are ludicrous, but mine are harmless spoofs. The trend, likely just gaining steam, of defiling the names and reputations of Lincoln, Washington, and Jefferson and the history of the United States is not harmless.

If it were only stupid, that would be another matter. But it strikes to the heart and soul of many well-meaning Americans. It is also dangerous, because it also strikes to the heart and soul of many Americans who will not continue to ignore what they consider to be slurs on America. They likely started-off as well meaning, but desecrations of near-mythical American heroes---coupled with other dissatisfactions---are alienating them from their country. And it must be said, our current President has only added fuel to this fire.

We Americans need to take a step back accompanied with a deep breath. We are on thin ice with this issue.