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on issues affecting African Americans
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Who Mourns for the Confederate Slave?

Artur "Jefferson" Davis Coons It Up

The Fifth Column

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Klansman and Nazi David Duke was arrested in Prague, Czech Republic the last week of April 2009: it is a crime to deny the Holocaust. In Germany and Austria, it is a crime to express support for National Socialism; it is even problematic to honor soldiers who died fighting for Hitler.

By contrast, recently Auburn, Alabama Councilman Arthur Dowdell removed some Confederate flags from a local cemetery, and white supremacist groups are calling for *his* arrest.

Neo-Confederate organizations, such as the [25,000-member](#) United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the League of the South, and the Council of Conservative Citizens (sometimes called "[the uptown Klan](#)"), typically send out a nationwide alert to respond to what they call a "heritage violation." Although to the general public, their slogan is "heritage not hate," anyone on the receiving end—particularly if he is African-American, as is Councilman Dowdell—will face a barrage of racist death threats, such as "I hope you are killed in the most violent, bloody way possible by another worthless jigaboo ni**er!!! WHITE POWER!!! HEIL HITLER!!!"

What is significant is not that white supremacists share the neo-Confederates' affinity for the (heritage, not hate) Confederate flag, but that the neo-Confederates—despite trying to [intimidate](#) a white Princeton University historian merely because he mentioned the neo-Confederates' "rather thinly veiled support for white supremacy"—never disavow those elements of their movement, the way, for example, Barack Obama disavowed Louis Farrakhan.

Indeed, in 1931 the United Daughters of the Confederacy "voted to see that the last meeting place of the Ku Klux Klan in Nashville, and from where the last ride was made,

is suitably marked.” You can even find a [UDC postcard](#) bearing the proud image of a Klansman on horseback, in full regalia. Contemporary neo-Confederate groups will make excuses for the Klan of the 1860’s or the [Klan of the 1920’s](#)—saying that they were just defending “Southerners” (not pointing out that they mean “white Southerners”)—but will not condemn the Klan categorically.

Another claim neo-Confederates make is that the Civil War was not about slavery, the “proof” being that only 0.00000004% of Confederates ever even thought about owning slaves (and never mistreated any). Despite that fact—the Civil War was actually caused by Lincoln’s raising the mint julep tax—the United Daughters of the Confederacy have wondered “whether emancipation has been a blessing to our country,” or whether it “has introduced evils that in the end will be more terrible than slavery.” This is a strange statement, since, according to *The United Daughters of the Confederacy Magazine* in 1989, slavery was not too bad: the worst victims were “the crews of the slave ships.”

Oddly, Alabama’s ordinance of secession states quite clearly what the war was about: “it is the desire and purpose of the people of Alabama to meet the slaveholding States of the South” in order to form a new government. Alexander Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy, said in 1861 that “the new Constitution has put at rest forever all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institutions—African slavery as it exists among us, the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution.”

But so what? The Auburn councilmembers will be barraged with thousands of calls and letters from angry neo-Confederates, and there will be no supporters of Councilman Dowdell. Mayor Bill Ham will [wash his hands](#), and either criticize Councilman Dowdell himself or allow others to use the government apparatus and the media to persecute Dowdell, perhaps threatening his employment. [Artur Davis](#) will get another “[A+](#)” from the NAACP.


Forget “truth”: As John Brown and Claus von Stauffenberg found, you can be right during the day, and hanged by nightfall. Yes, you can.


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