

April 23, 2014

Mr. Kenneth Ruscio  
President  
Washington and Lee University  
204 West Washington Street  
Lexington, Virginia 24450

Dear Mr. Ruscio,

Upon hearing of the demands made recently by W&L Law Students calling themselves “The Committee”, we felt compelled to write and respectfully request that you quickly and firmly let these misguided students know that there will be no capitulation to demands such as these, designed specifically to denigrate and desecrate General Lee and his mausoleum.

We hope that instead of giving in to their demands, that you will take the necessary actions to further the education of these students, who all apparently have not been taught of the honor and valor of the man who single handedly rescued the university from permanently shutting its doors.

Specifically, we suggest that the students need to be taught to understand that:

- 1) The flags that are on display in the Mausoleum are Confederate Battle Flags, the flags of the soldiers under General Lee’s command, and the flags under which students of the University fought and died. Undoubtedly, thousands of students enrolled today, have ancestors who also fought and died under those flags. To force their removal for the sake of misguided and ignorant assumptions would be a sacrilege, and a desecration of what in effect is a Confederate monument.
- 2) The men and women who gather in the Lee Chapel on Lee-Jackson day are not “NEO-Confederates”. This slur originated with some very hate-filled people who wish to see all things Confederate dishonored. By using a term that sounds similar to “Neo-Nazi”, they have effectively planted the (blatantly false) connection to certain hate groups to the point at which even these law students have fallen victim to the brain washing. The Sons of Confederate Veterans, who sponsors the events of Lee-Jackson Day, has its origins in 1896. There is nothing “new” (neo) about the organization, or its commitment to honoring the Confederate Soldier, and absolutely nothing about the organization or the people who attend the event that could be considered even remotely “offensive” by students, faculty, or the general public.
- 3) There is no need for the University to apologize on behalf of Robert E Lee or anyone else for the institution of slavery, which was legal and practiced in the ENTIRE United States for the first 86 years of its existence. Robert E. Lee did not own slaves when he accepted the Presidency of the University, and none of the students on “The Committee” were ever enslaved by anyone, as far as we know.

We appreciate that the University indeed enjoys a diverse student and faculty population. Is it not ironic, however, that those who are making the most noise in the name of “diversity” are actually calling for the banning of the flags and descendants of an entire group of people, who simply wish to honor the memory of Robert E. Lee, a man who is still today, upheld as a an example of courage, duty, honor, and Christian character across the globe?

We respectfully submit that any capitulation to these demands will only lead to more demands and further desecration, and entreat you to stand firm in defense of General Lee, in the manner he would expect of those who lead the university.

As an active heritage defense organization, the Va Flaggers would like to issue an invitation to meet with the students and/or University officials to help dispel any misunderstandings and/or false information that members of “The Committee” have somehow acquired regarding General Lee, the Confederate soldier, and/or the intent and character of those of us who honor their memory today.

In any case, we would appreciate the favor of a reply, at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

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