

MITCH McCONNELL

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

An Imperfect Nation Built By Imperfect Heroes Is Still the Most Perfect Union the World Has Ever Seen

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) delivered the following remarks today on the Senate floor regarding statue mobs:

"Two weeks ago, I argued that civil discourse in America faces a crossroads. A major newspaper had buckled under pressure from a social media mob. They apologized profusely for publishing a policy argument from a U.S. Senator and made personnel changes to prove their penitence. I said we can either recommit to our tradition of reasoned debate or let angry mobs run our culture. Well, recent days have reminded us it is not just our present-day debates that far-left radicals want to overwhelm. They also want to rewrite our past.

Back in 2017, when people wondered whether the far left would be satisfied with understandable conversations over Confederate statues, major newspapers and media figures literally mocked that worry. They said there were obvious differences between rebel generals and our nation's founders. The mobs would never come for them. Well, the far left missed the memo. A few days ago, in Portland, Oregon, a mob graffitied a statue of our first President, pulled it down, and burned an American flag over his head.

This is George Washington. Another Washington statue was defaced in Baltimore. A statue of Thomas Jefferson was ripped down in Portland also. This is the general and first President who built our nation, and the author of the Declaration of Independence. Genius statesmen who helped begin this grand experiment that has brought freedom to hundreds of millions and saved the world a few times for good measure.

And yet a crazy fringe is treating their monuments like vanity statues of tinhorn tyrants. Our founding fathers are being roped to the ground like they were Saddam Hussein. The list goes on. Saint Junipero Serra — the missionary settler whom Pope Francis celebrated here in Washington

a few years ago, to bipartisan applause. He sided with native people over soldiers. Ulysses S. Grant — the general who crushed the Confederacy. The president who used federal force to fight the Klan. They, too, have been placed on the historical hit list for this new Red Guard that nobody elected. More monuments toppled up and down the West Coast. There could be no clearer sign that these far-left radicals have severed any connection to the righteous cause of racial justice. They have literally tried to succeed where Robert E. Lee failed and bring General Grant to the ground. Now, like any Cultural Revolution, this far-left anger is sparing some heroes of their own. I understand that in Seattle, a large statue of Vladimir Lenin stands quite untouched.

Apparently, people claim with a straight face that this Communist statue has survived because it is located – wait for it – on private property! So the founding father of the mass-murdering Soviet Union watches over Seattle streets, but our own founding fathers are dragged in dirt. A small slice of our national elite has spent years cooking up highfalutin theories to justify the cheapest, basest forms of anti-Americanism. The absurd claim that America’s deepest founding principle is bigotry has escaped the ivory tower and begun seeping into society.

The United States of America can and should have nuanced conversations about our complex past. We can and should have discussions about our future. We can and should have peaceful protests. But this lawlessness serves none of that. It is just an alliance of convenience between angry criminals who think it’s fun to wreak havoc... and a slice of elite society that profits off saying our country is evil and deserves the abuse. Enough. Enough. The vast majority of Americans know full well that imperfect heroes are still heroes; that our imperfect union is still the greatest nation in world history. Americans know our imperfect framers built our nation on moral truths that have fueled improvement beyond anything their generation could have built themselves.

The American people know this. And they also know that we cannot let angry mobs carrying rope act outside the rule of law. It was central to the 14th Amendment and the Civil Rights movement that law enforcement and local authorities may not do their jobs selectively. If “equal protection of the laws” means anything, it means mayors and governors cannot selectively stand down because they would rather not pay the political price for confronting a particular mob. But that is precisely what we’re seeing in Democratic-governed cities across the country. In Seattle, for weeks now, a mayor has let bands of people ban police from several square blocks. People have been shot. A teenager has died. But apparently, stopping this insanity has been deemed less politically correct than letting it continue. Night after night, governors and mayors have stood down and watched criminals spray-paint churches and topple statues. Public order is now totally optional and depends on the lawbreakers’ politics.

Here in Washington, last night, local police protected one monument from a memorial-hunting mob near the White House. It is past time for that courage to be replicated in every city, every night, until

Americans have the peace and the rule of law that every citizen deserves. It is no surprise that people who want to say our country is intrinsically evil are so frantic to erase history that they'll break the law to do it. Erasing history is the only way their claims could carry any water. Americans know that an imperfect nation built by imperfect heroes is still the most perfect Union the world has ever seen. We are proud to build statues of the geniuses who fought to found this country.

We are proud to build statues of the leaders who've preserved it. We are proud to build statues of prophetic civil rights leaders who made the country confront gross injustice. We thank God that all kinds of imperfect people have made us a more perfect union. And when the dust settles, it is never the mobs or bullies whom we honor. It is the brave leaders who confront them."