

# **HERMIT HERALD**

## **VOL 1 ISSUE 43**

**JUNE 28, 2020**

### **QUOTE FOR THE DAY:**

**“If the U.S. doesn’t give us what we want, we will burn down the system and replace it.”  
Hank Newsom, greater NY president of BLM.**

### **NEED TO HEAR MORE OF NEWSOM’S VIEWS:**

**Martha MacCallum had a long interview with Newsom, which encompassed some out and out scary statements. Let’s just contemplate a few of these:**

**Finishing the above quote he says,” And I could be speaking figuratively. I could be speaking literally. It’s a matter of interpretation.”**

**He goes on, “I don’t condone nor condemn rioting.” And then, the piece de resistance, “I just want black liberation and black sovereignty, by any means possible.”**

**I can't help but think back to the comment a Nordstrom executive made after one of their stores was looted. In effect he said, " We don't blame you for looting our store. We feel your pain." What a wonderfully enabling statement to feed into Newsom's aberrant comments.**

**So there it is: Demands to be met, or burn it down (conjures up the Black Panthers of the 1960s). And then, guidance for his followers to take it literally or figuratively, along with violence, neither condemn nor condone. Wow, to his followers, what helpful guidance. In essence, do whatever the hell you want.**

**Readers, as I noted in issue 35, from my days in the FBI in the 60s involved with the Black Panthers, this is not a rerun you want to see. I was in the original movie. As I expressed in that issue, it's only a matter of time before successors to Huey Newton and Bobby Seal come to the fore. With the incendiary comments of Newsom, we have a serious candidate.**

**WHY AMERICA MUST BE DISASSEMBLED:**

**I had questioned in earlier issues why all the focus was on obliterating everything that had anything to do with the Confederacy, pointing out that slavery has been a major and unfortunate part of our history ever since the 1700s, way before the Civil War. Well, an unauthorized copy of my writings must have fallen into protestors' hands because everyone is now fair game; Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and on and on. Oh, and don't expect the desecrators to have a brain in their head, they even took down General Kosciusko of Poland who was a hero on our side in the Revolutionary War, as they did in Madison, Wisconsin with the statue of Hans Christian Heg who died trying to abolish slavery.**

**Context is also important. Last issue I stated I could see the rationale in removing the Statue of Theodore Roosevelt from in front of the Museum of Natural Science. He is shown on horse back with a native indian standing to his right and a black man to his left. To many, myself included, the hierarchial structure conveys an air of superiority. Now I read an account that that was far from the creator's, James Fraser, intent. In addition to honoring**

**Roosevelt, it was paying tribute to the Indians and blacks who had helped Roosevelt in his explorations and surveys. To Fraser, they represented, “Roosevelt’s friendliness to all races.” The problem is there is nothing that says that – no context.**

**That makes it appear that maybe we got it all wrong, until we read that, “As an arch conservationist he put vast stretches of American land under Federal protection, but took much of that land from Native Indians.”**

**A Smithsonian website describes him as, “A racist whose beliefs reflected those of the elite of his day. Roosevelt thought African-Americans to be inferior to white citizens.” Roosevelt’s actions would seem to refute Smithsonian’s words in that, as mentioned last issue, he had blacks for dinners, both as Governor of New York and then, Booker T. Washington, at the White House when he was president.**

**Context is everything. Reference is made to the Bronze relief found on the Boston Common that depicts Colonel Robert Shaw on horseback**

**leading an all black Union Army Brigade to a battle in South Carolina where many of the soldiers, including Shaw, were killed and all buried together. If you didn't know that context, you might think this was another reflection of, "white man's superiority." Individuals unaware of that history defaced the monument in May.**

**Sorry to go on at such length, but coming to grips with what goes and what stays is a pretty critical issue in this period of soul searching.**

**Holland Cotter writes, "All to say that the disposal of monuments should be approached case by case..." "In the current healthy drive to neutralize assaultive images, it's necessary, for history's sake, that we first stand back, look hard, sort them out."**

**Well said, except, like the four blind men describing the elephant, there are a lot of different view points. Who are the jurors?**

**Kathleen Parker comments, "Should we review the past through a filtered lens of today's woke-fullness? It's one thing to be informed**

**and mindful; quite another to be perpetually wounded and vengeful.”**

**And the latest; of course, it's not enough to tear down statues, but all reminders of our history must be sanitized including books and all forms of art.**

**Along comes Arlen Parsa to divulge information on one of America's most important paintings, John Trumbull's oil painting, "Declaration of Independence" which hangs in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. Turns out that 34 of the 47 men depicted in the painting owned slaves. Sad, but true. So what are we to do, white out those faces or burn the painting, an important part of our history?**

**France has, what seems to me, a reasonable solution. We don't think of France as having been involved in slavery issues, but they were up to their elbows in it, especially in the Bordeaux region. "From 1672 to 1837, 180 ship owners in Bordeaux led 480 expeditions that transported as many as 150,000 Africans to France's Caribbean colonies, making**

**Bordeaux the most important slave-trading port after Nantes.”**

**As a result Bordeaux became fabulously wealthy with buildings and statuary to show for it. Bordeaux has been wrestling with this part of its history for at least a decade. Deputy Mayor, Mark Fetouh, explains it this way, “The past must be remembered and explained, in contrast to a number of people pushing to tear down statues in Europe and the United States. Getting rid of statues won’t erase horrible crimes that have been committed. Not only do you not change history, but you deprive yourself of ways to explain it.” The Bordeaux solution is, “instead of tearing down the telltales of its ugly history, it has put up plaques to acknowledge and explain it.”**

**At the end of the day, do we keep our statues that various groups of people find reprehensible and give them context, or, in an orderly manner (not by marauding crowds) do we remove them from public places? Keith Christiansen, Chairman of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art says, “Monuments of those who promoted racist**

**ideologies and systems should never be glorified or in a location where they can cause further harm.” Well said, except you can’t be half pregnant. So, Americans, what do you do about Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and nine other slave owning presidents of the United States? And don’t forget those prominent 34 national leaders in Trumbull’s painting. Complicated, yes?**

**THIS JUST IN FROM A READER:**

**With a preface from your scribe: In issue 41, I wrote about Actions vs Reactions, that is, those good things that are happening (pro active corporate and community endeavors) as opposed to the brainless, feeding frenzy, reactive behavior that is sullyng the name and good efforts of those seeking genuine change and, yes, unfortunately, a real backlash is growing as a result of these lawless acts.**

**In the sincere effort to exhibit greater sensitivity, some of the decisions that come down are head scratchers.**



**Lincoln County, Oregon has exempted non-white people from a new order requiring that face coverings be worn in public. Those people do not have to follow the rule if they, “have heightened concern about racial profiling and harassment” over wearing the masks.**

**What? Is the architect of that concept saying, in effect, that black people wearing masks may be perceived as threats- hey, maybe even bank robbers? The rule, just by itself, appears to reflect stereotyping and racial bias.**

**Your faithful scribe,**

**PB**