



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Office of the Commander-in-Chief

Donald L. Martin

6025 State Route 772

Chillicothe, Ohio

cinc@suvcw.org



General Order # 21

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It has come to the attention of the National Order of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) of the events taking place regarding the Nash Farm Battlefield Museum in Georgia. We, the actual descendants of the Union Soldiers that fought to protect the Union of this great country, find the action portrayed in several news reports to be troubling to say the least.

Over the past decades the SUVCW has been called upon to explain our position regarding the flying of the flags of the confederacy as well as the destruction of various monuments and the renaming of battlefields to parks. We have taken the position that history must be preserved in complete truthfulness. If you change or revise history you change the meaning and quite possibly the credibility of the truth of that history. If you do away with the Confederacy and the soldiers that fought on that side, you also lessen the contribution of the soldiers and statesmen that fought to preserve the United States. The revision of history can also change the credibility of the reasons for which battles were fought and if they were in fact even fought.

The SUVCW website contains two policies that have and are currently the standing of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War regarding not only the flying of flags of the Civil War era, but the Interpretation of Civil War Battlefields for the National Park Service. We further believe that our policy on the NPS interpretation also applies to State and local parks and their position on the Civil War.

Policy on the National Park Service Interpretation Program of the Civil War Battlefields.

A statement made by Dr. John Latschar, when Superintendent of the Gettysburg National Military Park, best describes the mission of the National Park Service and their interpretive policy on the Civil War battlefields. According to Dr. Latschar, an Act of Congress in 1990 directed the Gettysburg NMP to “interpret the Battle of Gettysburg in the larger context of the Civil War and American history, including the causes and consequences of the Civil War and including the effects of the war on all the American people.” He further states that in 1999, a Congressional report added that Civil War Battlefields such as Gettysburg should “recognize and include the unique role that the institution of slavery played in the Civil War.”

The Constitution of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) clearly defines the mission or purpose of the SUVCW. Our Primary mission is “To Perpetuate the memory of the

Grand Army of the Republic.....to teach.... the true history of our country...to oppose every tendency or movement that would weaken loyalty to, or make the destruction or impairment of our constitutional Union ...to inculcate and broadly sustain the American principles ofequal rights, and of impartial justice for all.

In conformity to our Constitution and Congressional Charter the SUVCW maintains the most important goal of the National Park Service relative to Civil War battlefields should be (1) The physical preservation of the battlefields, and (2) The NPS interpretative program, which is designed to inform the public about what happened on the battlefield should focus on the story of the battle that took place on the battlefield. At the Gettysburg battlefield the interpretative program, has traditionally included such things according to Dr. Latschar as, “tactical movements, the decisions of generals, the engagements of opposing units, and the heroism and valor of individual soldiers, both Union and Confederate.” This seems to have also been the prevalent policy at other Civil War battlefields. Based on the aforementioned Congressional mandates the interpretative program now includes the slavery issue.

The SUVCW has no quarrel with the inclusion of this issue in the NPS interpretative program as long as it does not negatively impact the two goals previously mentioned, and as long as it is presented in a historically accurate manner. Under no circumstances do we support what has come to be referred to as “revisionist” history – “altering” historical facts to fit modern social philosophy. *Approved February 27, 2003 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*

There were numerous issues that culminates in the American Civil War. But, regardless of whether we make a short list, or a long list of the causes for the Civil War, they all invariably emanate from the issue of slavery. Thus it seems only reasonable that the National Park Service should mention this issue in their interpretative program. We view the inclusion of the slave issue as an expansion of the existing program. The slave issue should not be used by the NPS as a substitute for their traditional interpretative program.

Ordered this 31st Day of May 2017.

Donald L. Martin
Commander-In-Chief
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Attested:
Jonathan Davis
Secretary, National Order,
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

The war is over — the rebels are our countrymen again. — Ulysses S. Grant