

Let's Call Them Ignorant Bigots

The spread of bigoted racism and displays of abysmal ignorance at what are supposed to be centers of learning in the United States and Britain is saddening and appears to be becoming out of control. In recent days, displays of that inverted racism and bigotry, including outbreaks of antisemitism and animosity towards the memory of Cecil Rhodes, wealthy mining magnate who initiated Rhodes Scholarships, have been exhibited at Oxford University and Oberlin College. Now the bigotry is being inflated in nonsensical fashion again at Oxford, joined by absurd protestors from Royal Holloway College, London in March madness.

A group at Oxford called Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) stemming from the original group at the University of Cape Town (UCT) is organizing that march. The RMF campaign began on March 9, 2015 when a student at UCT threw human faeces at the statue of Cecil Rhodes. This was followed by demonstrations and demands that the statue be removed. After the Senate of the University voted in favor, the Rhodes statue was removed a month later, on April 9, 2015.

Even the Senate meeting to discuss the removal was disrupted by student protestors with alarming cries of "One Settler, One Bullet," a slogan that had been used during the old apartheid regime by the armed wing of the Pan Africanist Congress.

The ludicrous behavior by supposed students continued in other South African universities as other statues were defaced and calls were made for the "decolonization of education" in South Africa. But bigotry had only just started. Two weeks later, on April 25, 2015 the president, a man named Mcebo Dlamini, of the Students' Representative Council of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (Wits University), a South

African research university where Nelson Mandela had studied, told us in his Facebook post that he loved Adolf Hitler and admired the Nazi leader for his “charisma and organizational skills.”

Dlamini was following a graphic comparing the State of Israel to Nazi Germany. A few days later he informed the world, “Jews are devils.” Though his mastery of the subject was previously unknown to the wide world, Dlamini told us he had researched and read books about “President Hitler”, though Hitler was never “President” of anything. He also told us that every white person has “an element of Adolf Hitler.” He blamed Jews who have not forgotten Hitler “even after they were paid,” though it was unmentioned who and how. Moreover, he wanted to know why there were no statues of Hitler in Poland, Germany, or Austria, while elsewhere there were statues of Rhodes and Jan van Riebeeck, the colonial administrator. In a mystifying statement, this brilliant scholar informed us that those two were worse than Hitler because “Hitler only killed bodies.”

Dlamini was not examined by a psychiatrist, but he was dismissed as president of the student body on charges of “misconduct.” His criticism of Jewish South African entrepreneurs, Barney Barnato and Harry Oppenheimer were not mentioned. Not surprisingly, the dismissal was opposed by the Rhodes Must Fall movement.

Interestingly, the bigots, becoming more physically militant and destroying property, buses and cars, and the office of the vice-chancellor of the university, also vandalized the statue of Jan Smuts, who was British educated, was twice Prime Minister of South Africa and took part in the founding of the United Nations. In Britain, a group at Christ’s College, Cambridge where Smuts was educated has called for severing a memorial fund left by him.

The Rhodes Must Fall movement spread to the 690 year-old Oriel College where Rhodes had studied and which he funded. It

demanding the statue of Rhodes at Oriel, high above a doorway, be removed. The Oxford Student Union in January 2016 voted, 245-212, to remove the statue, but the College has not done so. It was immediately aware that potential donors were threatening to withdraw funds worth more than £100 million. It was forced to postpone or abandon a fundraising campaign, while saying euphemistically that the Rhodes situation was a reminder of the complexity of history and the legacies of colonialism.

As always in the case of bigots, hypocrisy was not absent from the RMF movement that argued, at best, that the Rhodes statue was at odds with "inclusive culture" at Oxford, and there should be "decolonization" of the curriculum. The case is clear. The RMF leader, a man named Ntokozo Qwabe, was himself a beneficiary of the Rhodes bequest, and had been funded by the Rhodes scholarship during his time as an undergraduate law student at Keble College, Oxford.

The National Union of Student's black students campaign addressed Oxford as "one of the most male, pale, and stale places of learning in Britain." It dignified the RMF movement as protest against the philosophy of racial violence and apartheid. It applauded the march organized by RMF to take place in March 2016 that was to be an "imperial tour of racist Oxford."

That march for "decolonization" will be joined by a group from the Royal Holloway College, London calling for the large statue of Queen Victoria to be removed from its site at Egham, Surrey. Their excuse is that Victoria was responsible for sanctioning colonial exploits and upholding the image of white supremacy and racism. This group links up with RMF because Rhodes was given a Royal Charter in October 1889 to establish the British South African Company. Rhodes's company maintained law and order, but Britain reserved supreme control, and no slave trade was allowed. The ignorant students did not understand that in the British constitutional monarchy, the

Queen reigned but did not rule since the government made decisions. Those students maligned the innocent Victoria.

It is sad that this nonsense in Britain is taking place at a time and place when the British head of counterintelligence, the Scotland Yard Assistant Commissioner, Mark Rowley, has informed the country that ISIS is planning a “spectacular” attack on British soil. Ten years after 7/7 (July 7, 2005 when terrorist attacks in Central London killed 52 and injured hundreds) an increasing number of suspects are being held. It is disconcerting that three quarters of those arrested are British nationals, 14 per cent are female, and that 13 per cent are under 20.

The answer to bigots is obvious and can be simply stated. It might take three forms. First, since they find Oxford so undesirable, why not go elsewhere to be educated? There are universities in Iran, Syria, Yemen, and Libya.

Secondly, those students who go further and are more aggressive than mere verbal dissent and who engage in violent activity and unacceptable racist remarks should be prosecuted or expelled from college. Quiet, lonely study is not for them. Thirdly, those who like Qwabe, have accepted generous funding, originating from Rhodes or elsewhere should give the money back. That would be a real rejection of “colonialism” and an indication of real moral principle.