

Memorial causes uproar

Rock represents slavery, bravery

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What is the difference between slavery and bravery? Racism and patriotism? Confusion reigned for several months last year over the Confederate Rock, which blacks saw as a symbol of racism.

Last August, City Manager Terry Novak ordered the Confederate Rock, dedicated to the Boone County men who served the Confederacy, hauled away. Novak decided the objection of blacks who resented the rock's presence was reason enough to remove the historical monument from its resting place at Ninth Street and Conley Avenue.

The 4.5-tonne (5.5-ton) rock was hauled to Airport Park early one Friday morning. The Legion of Black Collegians objected to the rock as a symbol of racism. The women who dedicated the rock praised the valor of soldiers.

The soldiers were Boone Countians who lived in a time of turbulence and violence. The Civil War brought particularly bitter strife to the border states. Two-thirds of Missouri's population was of Southern descent. Boone County was a stronghold of Southern sympathy, yet its county seat was a Union army post. Though exact figures never have been obtained, Boone County historians estimate that 500 county residents fought in each army.

The Civil War in Missouri was a guerilla war. There were numerous bloody skirmishes and civilians often were affected. Guerilla warfare usually stirs civilian sentiment, and the citizens of Boone County often were embroiled in partisan conflict. Many University buildings and streets in Columbia were named in honor of the Union officers quartered in Columbia during the war. A sampling of Confederate partisanship from "History of Boone County":

"Two ladies living near Columbia were arrested by order of Capt. H. N. Cook, commander of post of Columbia, for insultingly getting off the sidewalk into the gutter in order to avoid passing beneath a Union flag."

Partisanship ran high after the war; the Missouri Historical Society lists 16 Confederate and 10 Union monuments known in the state. In 1935, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) dedicated a granite boulder to the Confederate soldiers of Boone County. The June 4 (chosen because it was Jefferson Davis' birthday) ceremony was attended by U.S. Sen. W. L. Nelson and Lt. Gov. Frank G. Harris. The rock was accepted by Columbia Mayor R. Searcy Pollard.

The Legion of Black Collegians wanted the rock "out

of the public view," because "as a symbol of racism on the University campus, it hurt recruiting efforts," said LBC Executive Secretary Marvin Thompson. So, when last April the LBC sent a list of demands to University officials, one of

commemorate soldiers who served in this war. The object of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was to pursue historical significance."

On Aug. 12, however, Dean of Student Affairs James Banning sent a request to Novak that a conference be set up for members of LBC with city officials to discuss possible removal of the rock.

Four days later, the rock was gone. No appointment had been made with Banning or the students, the City Council had not discussed it, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy was not consulted.

Moving the rock to Airport Park did not accomplish LBC's objective of moving it from the public view. Marilyn Quaintance, LBC chairman of campus and community relations, said, "We're happy it's been moved, but the demand hasn't been met as such."

The United Daughters of the Confederacy was not happy the rock was moved, said Mrs. George Duncan, president of UDC.

The Boone County Court voted unanimously Dec. 5 to place the rock on the courthouse lawn.

Former presiding judge James Butcher concluded the meeting by saying, "I personally reject the idea there is anything racist about the rock. The primary cause of the war was states' rights, as opposed to slavery."

The 'rock' represents racism to some, heroism to others

the 15 demands was that the rock be removed.

Herbert Schooling, University chancellor, said officials met with LBC members in April. "Some of us at the time pointed out it was a memorial, and the attempt was not to commemorate slavery but to

