

September 9, 2020

Senator Tom Cotton
Arkansas
326 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cotton:

I took great interest in the Senate Bill S.4292 that you wrote and introduced on July 23, 2020. It's referred to as the "Saving American History Act of 2020." This bill is a veiled attack on the First Amendment and extremely thin on logic.

Your attempt to merge "fundamental principles" and actual history into an unchangeable truth is a fool's errand. The real purpose of this bill is censoring one newspaper and intimidating the independent school districts in this country.

Let's start with paragraph (4), in which you pronounce that the 1619 Project is a "distortion of American history." I hate having to take you to the intellectual truth woodshed in the backyard, but "free labor" gave our new country quite the advantage in world trade and domestic wealth, and let's not forget that free labor was provided by SLAVES.

I must add, Senator, there's a difference between revising a myth and correcting a lie. Stop threatening the integrity of this great nation. Property was taken from freed slaves and given to white people. Were you absent from school the day that was taught?

It's not the federal government's role to form people into "knowledgeable and patriotic citizens." It's not your responsibility to write the textbooks. Your bill assumes that your opinion should override the facts.

I'm sure you've read every paragraph of the 1619 Project, but if you haven't then shame on you. My family came here on a boat in 1694, but they weren't held at gunpoint. I am sure your relatives weren't taken by force and made to work without compensation. You were able to go to school at Harvard, and it's good to see that 7% of their currently enrolled students are African American. We are making progress. Why do you want to impede it?

I'm sure your intent with S.4292 was to protect our children from learning the truth about our founding fathers, but you could have ordered all the history books you disagree with to be burned. Stop wasting our tax dollars on your partisan, political grandstanding. Why not have your staff take the time to do the research before you embarrass yourself? Which parts of the 1619 Project are so dangerous to us?

Could it be the suggestion that one of the reasons for the US rebellion against England was the possibility of losing slaves? Does that one bother you? Certainly, you know that in 1772, British Chief Justice Lord Mansfield freed a slave with the words, "No one could be enslaved in England." There was a genuine fear that this ruling could affect the colonies, and that was four years before our Declaration of Independence.

In fact, British soldiers encouraged American slaves to leave their plantations and fight for the Redcoats, promising their freedom in return. The wonderful minds of our founding fathers knew exactly what was at stake. There were many draft copies of the Declaration of Independence, and admissions about the hypocrisy of slavery were taken out. You know, censored, by southern states.

Maybe you will never get to read this letter, but the facts are on the table. You can learn them and end up smarter than a fourth grader and understand that being critical of our founding fathers is not wrong, it's necessary. Remember Senator, Proclamation 95, the Emancipation Proclamation, was an executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862. We declared that all men are created equal, but it took 86 years for all men to be free. It's nothing to be proud of; it's simply a fact.

You can ignore that Thomas Jefferson decried bi-racial sexual relationships while having numerous children with African slaves. Remember that Sally Hemmings was an enslaved girl only 14 years old when he took her to bed. Surely you know about lynching, rape, voter suppression and intimidation, right? Oh, am I bothering you? These are historical facts, Senator. Please don't try to whitewash them.

It's so kind of you to exempt the "free and reduced-price school lunch program" from your draconian bill. Of course, you also deserve praise for not cutting funding for "students with disabilities." Both are so politically correct of you.

Your bill, like much of the other rubbish we've been hearing lately, is laced with racism, but that will not stop the truth from getting to the citizens of this country. You cannot cut off funding of the movie industry or the publishers of the land. America is a free country. Stop trying to make it like a communist country.

Please withdraw the bill and stop using the word "integrity." You cannot be trusted with it, so please stop using it. Oh, does looking in the mirror bother you?