

## Tekst 2

# Washington vanishes

NEW ORLEANS

**(1)** ALTHOUGH it ended more than a century ago, slavery engendered a deep anger that remains near the surface of American life. In New Orleans, that anger has found an unlikely target: no less than George Washington, the country's first president.

**(2)** Last month, in keeping with a policy of dropping slave-owners' names from public schools, the city's school board changed the name of George Washington Elementary. The school was renamed after Charles Drew, a pioneering black doctor who urged the army to stop segregating blood by race. No one doubts that Drew deserves the honour. The question is whether Washington deserves the dishonour, just because he owned slaves.

**(3)** Washington's was the latest in a string of school name-changes, 22 since the policy took hold four years ago. Although their names still appear on statues and streets throughout the city, Confederate leaders such as Robert E. Lee, P.G.T. Beauregard and Jefferson Davis are gone from school walls. Some schools have been renamed after accomplished blacks, others after white civil-rights leaders.

**(4)** Those changes give the city's young blacks cause for pride, says Carl Galmon, whose civil-rights group fought for the name-changing policy. He points out that the city's public schools are 90.3% black; yet, out of 121 schools, 49 were originally named after slave-owners. He thinks it is "a total insult to have our students receiving diplomas, wearing band uniforms ... singing songs and



honouring people who enslaved our ancestors."

**(5)** Changing a school's name still takes work: a vote of parents, faculty and students, and approval from the board. But protesters say the Washington case proves the policy is still too knee-jerk, and favours simple politics over complicated history. George Washington has an impressive resumé, after all: victory in the Revolutionary War, the framing of government. Couldn't the board make an exception for the father of the country?

**(6)** The board should also think a bit about history, says William Gwyn, a retired professor of political science at Tulane University. In the 1790s, Washington was far more enlightened than most slave-owners. He freed his slaves in his will and disapproved of slavery. But he thought he could not destroy the institution without jeopardising the nation. "To judge the man on this one aspect of his life alone, I think, is grossly unfair," Mr Gwyn said.

**(7)** But Mr Galmon says that, when it comes to slavery, there are no mitigating circumstances. "I've never heard of a good slave-owner," he says. He next wants to purge the names of four mixed-race New Orleanians who owned slaves despite being part-black themselves. Theirs may not be a pretty legacy. But one wonders whether the alternative is much better: a past seen only as black or white.

*The Economist*

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Tekst 2 heeft tot onderwerp “dropping slave-owners’ names from public schools” (alinea 2).

In de alinea’s 5 en 6 worden twee uiteenlopende argumenten genoemd om voor George Washington een uitzondering te maken.

2p **2** Geef van elk argument aan waarop dit neerkomt.

1p **3** Noteer de eerste twee woorden van de zin waarin de schrijver zijn mening met betrekking tot de “name-changing policy” toelicht.