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Presidents Lincoln and Roosevelt, Foundational American Heroes

-NIAF protests the defacement and removal of Lincoln and Roosevelt statues in Portland, Ore.-

(Washington, D.C. – October 12, 2020) – The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) supports diversity, equity and inclusion. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Italians who emigrated to this country were consistently denied their rights and suffered discrimination that resulted in imprisonment and judgement by mob rule. We support public debate regarding the memorialization of historical figures in paintings, statuary, buildings, parks and other public spaces. It is with great sadness that we are now witnessing the destruction of monuments representing former Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

According to reports from The Associated Press, protesters vandalized and toppled statues of former Presidents Lincoln and Roosevelt in Portland on Sunday night “in a declaration of ‘rage’ toward Columbus Day.”

NIAF supports the American right to peacefully protest and supports people coming together in peace to seek justice and reform, and to transform pain into progress. We condemn intolerance, hate, discrimination and violence, as they are divisive to our democracy.

The Foundation strongly condemns the defacing of historic memorials and expects elected officials and law enforcement to protect these public memorials from further damage so that a substantive dialogue on their place in modern society can be heard.

The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and protecting the Italian American heritage and culture. To learn more about the Foundation and become a member, please visit www.niaf.org.