

The War for Southern Independence: A Radical Libertarian Perspective*

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I. Introduction

William Appleman Williams writes that history is a way of learning. If this is so, there certainly is much to be learned from a major crisis point like the War for Southern Independence. The conflict between North and South forced Americans to make not always clear-cut choices among values, and presented many fundamental issues still of interest to radicals and libertarians. This paper will present a radical libertarian analysis of the War of 1861–65; as such, it will disagree in many ways with existing interpretations. It will be frankly evaluative in libertarian terms and will not assume that things “had to” turn out just exactly as they did (*pace* the Locomotive of History). The discussion will be no more “presentist” than conventional viewpoints (with their tacit statist premises). But by starting from entirely opposed principles we will, it is hoped, contribute to the understanding of our common past.¹

On the assumption that what happened may not have been the most desirable or the only *possible* outcome, I will offer a libertarian assessment of other options and might-have-beens for contrast; none of these will be outside the realm of possibility or violate known scientific or praxeological laws. This essay will address Schumpeter’s “Marxist” query: “Who stood to gain?” and our own question: “What would have been a more libertarian path to the present?” (For present purposes I will assume a rough consensus on libertarian values and a hierarchy of these values in history.) If the present analysis contributes to a constructive reconsideration of the Confederate past, then perhaps Southerners, radicals and libertarians can begin using history “as a means of breaking the chains of the past.”²

II. The Historical Sentimentality of the Nationalists and Some Alternative Views

According to the dominant school of interpretation, which I shall call the “National-Liberal” or “Schlesinger-Treitschke” school, such reevaluation is

* The original version of this paper was presented at the Southeastern Regional Scholars Conference held at the University of South Carolina.

a waste of time, since the Confederate States of America (CSA) was a totally evil, "reactionary," retrograde enterprise cluttering the path of the Locomotive of History and the American Dream. This view is essentially the victors' account of the deeds of the vanquished, cleaned up a bit for scholarly consumption. Smug in their assumption of One Nation Indivisible, in which things always turn out for the best, the National-Liberal historians—like the Unionists in 1861—cannot even conceive of an alternative to subjugation of the South and denial of its claims to independence. Nonetheless, I believe that a fair consideration of the CSA Revolution will demonstrate the relevance of that experience to contemporary issues: imperialism, colonialism, state corporatism, decentralization vs. centralization, and the future of the South itself. We may find that, as Richard H. Shryock wrote in 1933, "at times all things work out for the worst, even for them that love the Union."³

Contrary to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s opinion,⁴ the Nationalist historians are the real "historical sentimentalists," willing to sacrifice everything else of value to maintain the territorial ambitions of the government in Washington against the expressed will of a whole "section" self-organized and claiming independence. But surely in such a case the burden of proof is on them that would wage war to deny the autonomy of others. Ideologically, the aggressive nationalism of the North, a region which equated itself with the mystical, unseverable Union, "caused" and "justified" the War. Unsurprisingly, this ideology of Union Forever was connected with a complex of concrete political and material interests (just as the South's desire for separate nationhood was connected with other interests, including the slave labor system). The question is: How are libertarians to judge between the competing ideological and material claims of North and South—short of abstaining altogether from historical analysis and assessment?

Not believing that large national states are their own justification, nor that the "good" unforeseen consequences of preserving the Union retrospectively justify Lincoln's decision to coerce the South, we must judge what happened in terms of the revolutionary right of self-determination and the evils of war itself. Thus it won't do to say that since Northern public opinion wished to "preserve" the Union, that *that* majority had the right to rule (that is, a "majority" only within the same Union white Southerners had rejected); nor will it do to say that the "Greater Union" somehow embodied the world-historical cause of liberalism, and that *therefore* violation of the South's self-determination was only a necessary and temporary diversion from liberal ideals justified by good deeds the Union was later to do.⁵ As the great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt wrote:

The subsequent amalgamation of the spoils which is actually achieved constitutes no moral exoneration of the robber. No good results can exculpate an evil past. . . . Ultimately, there is a great, indirect vindica-

tion of the evil-doer, namely that, without his foreknowledge, great historical purposes lying in the remote future were furthered by his deeds. This is, in particular, the argument of those who know that they owe their material benefits to all that came of the crime. But the counterquestions arise: "What do we know about purposes? And if they exist, could they not be accomplished in other ways? And are we to take no account of the blow dealt to morality by any successful crime?"⁶

The great liberal historian Lord Acton was of much the same opinion when he exhorted his students "to suffer no man and no cause to escape the undying penalty which history has the power to inflict on wrong."⁷

Yet the National-Liberal historians, and even some National-Radicals, defend the War of 1861–65 precisely in terms of supposed later good deeds by the United States. Since for the National-Liberals these good deeds include US entry into World War I, World War II and the Cold War, and since for some Radicals they include regulation of the market by the powerful central government that Lincoln saved, we may understand why libertarians entertain doubts about this vindication of the War. In any event, if the United States' world role since 1865 has been imperialist and if liberty has declined in many significant ways, then the very dubiousness of this proposed "justification" makes it fall of its own weight—except for hopeless Nationalists and other mystics.⁸

If the argument from "good results" is dubious and inconclusive, there is another consideration often adduced against leaving the CSA to go its way in peace. David M. Potter notes that historians typically write as though a distinctive group culture is the *sole* criterion for political autonomy. Around this pseudo-problem of "culture" has grown up an active debate. Nationalist historians promptly characterize the South as "American" (something no Southerner ever denied) and lacking some necessary quota of quaint cultural traits, and then reject the case for Southern independence.⁹ Given the empirical "Americanism" of the South, Southerners must argue rather awkwardly from folk-culture (perhaps their highest card), music, linguistic peculiarities, mint juleps and all the rest; since these items may not define a wholly unique culture, it becomes an uphill struggle in which "agrarianism," for example, is brought in as a last-ditch factor (as if the South couldn't diversify economically and still be the South).

But even here, a minimal argument could be built around the actual North/South differences, if it were necessary.¹⁰ As Potter observes, common interest has always been a major determinant of nationality and separatism, even if historians ignore it as they chase after cultural exoticisms to fit preconceptions about the nature of independence. Common interests the South certainly had *vis á vis* the North, including slavery but also much more—as the later Southern populist movement against Northeastern neo-mercantilist economic policies would demonstrate.¹¹

Thus, partly as a result of decades of sharp political struggle over the concrete goal of controlling federal policy on slavery, economics, expansion and the distribution of tax burdens, the Southern states by 1860 felt quite "nation-like" in terms of interests endangered by remaining in the Union as well as cultural divergence from the North. Even if not supported by large majorities of the politically active whites in every state claimed by the CSA, Southern separatism enjoyed sufficient support to sustain a war effort for over four years against overwhelming odds (in conventional terms). Thus perhaps the South's own feelings of separateness, wherever derived, ought to be taken at face value as establishing a claim to independence.

If we are guided by the classical liberal and libertarian principle of self-determination and not by the fuzzier later concept of nationality-as-culture, then the Southern cause seems even more worthy of support. The Austrian school economist and neo-liberal thinker Ludwig von Mises had some interesting observations on nationality in his wartime work *Omnipotent Government*. Criticizing as naive some Western European liberal notions on nationality, Mises cites as more correct the views of Ernest Renan. Paraphrasing Renan, Mises writes that self-determination is

Not the linguistic community, not the racial kinship founded on parentage from common ancestors, not religious congeniality, not the harmony of economic interests [!], not geographical or strategical considerations, but—the right of the population to determine its own destiny. The nation is the outcome of the will of human beings to live together in one state. . . . It is important to realize how this interpretation of the right of self-determination differs from the principle of nationality. The right of self-determination which Renan has in mind is not a right of linguistic groups but of individual men. It is derived from the rights of man [!]. "Man belongs neither to his language nor to his race; he belongs to himself."¹²

Mises notes that Renan does not adequately deal with the problems of Eastern Europe, where self-determination could lead to "Balkanization" into tiny linguistic enclaves (hardly an upsetting prospect as such). Not that Mises suggests abandoning self-determination because of difficulties in applying it; he merely comments that in a *laissez faire* world the issue would be defused.

In a non-*laissez faire* world, now as in 1860–61, self-determination, as formulated by Renan-Mises, seems to demand recognition of the political autonomy of "regions" and "sections" self-determined enough to assert it. Certainly the implication that full self-determination might lead to smaller states should not fill libertarians with the same horror it inspires in the National-Liberals. Indeed, the fact that secession implies "anarchy" is an argument in favor of secession, not against it.¹³ Consistent application of

self-rule to the Confederate case demands recognizing that it would have been more correct morally and practically to let the South go. Southerners possessed sufficient differences of interest and culture from the rest of the Union to will their independence. To accept this is not at all to disparage the equal right of Black Americans to use any means necessary to establish *their* freedom from the slaveholders (and from political oppression South *and* North). The issues, however, are separable, and Southern independence was the issue in 1860–61; the internal institutions of the CSA did not justify a war of conquest any more than the issue of feudalism, free markets or socialism in Vietnam, while important to the people there, justified forceful US intervention behind transparent “free-enterprise” (liberal-capitalist) slogans.

As John S. Rosenberg writes:

There is a revealing parallel between the Northern position in the Civil War and recent American interventions in other civil wars. In both cases there is a professed commitment to the principle of self-determination, but in both cases some attribute of those determining themselves invalidates the principle. In the case of the South, it was the presence of slavery; in our recent interventions, it was the presence of Communists, supposed or real, on one side of the conflict.¹⁴

On the merits of issues examined so far, I think we must be willing seriously to consider the South’s independence as the “more libertarian” option available at the time in an imperfect world.¹⁵ It seems worth re-emphasizing that support for the CSA against political “enslavement” to the North is in no way inconsistent with support by libertarians (then or now) for an internal “bourgeois” Revolution in the South against forced labor systems, land monopoly, institutionalized racism and the like. Thus libertarians would oppose all layers of statism, starting with (Yankee) imperialism—the highest relevant stage of statism for Americans.

Edward P. Lawton and William Appleman Williams both point out that the historical fatalism of the pro-Unionists has led them to turn the “Civil War” into a quasi-religious drama of “national” crucifixion and rebirth, a political baptism by fire admitting of no alternative.¹⁶ This has assisted the Nationalists in avoiding the other issues involved, and has displaced the uneasy realization that, as Williams observes, “Only a nation that avoided such a conflict could make a serious claim to being fundamentally different.” Thus the very War which might have raised the question whether the 600,000 dead and the massive destruction of material welfare perhaps outweighed the supposed benefits of the Union becomes proof positive of the Union’s virtues. On consideration of the set of issues and outcomes, however, we may find ourselves rejecting this conventional wisdom on the value of the Union.

III. Independence or Subjugation, Peace or War: Some Real Issues and Their Implications

As most historians stress, slavery was an issue in 1860–61 and in a sense underlay many other North/South differences leading up to secession. It does not follow, however, that slavery was therefore *the* issue. (If it was so critical, why not fight over it in 1800? 1828? 1856?) Rather, the issue over which war came was the independence of the newly organized Confederacy. As William Appleman Williams says, “the cause of the Civil War was the refusal of Lincoln and other northerners to honor the revolutionary right of self-determination—the touchstone of the American Revolution.” The denial became habit, and there has been “no end of empire except war and more war.”¹⁷

Edward P. Lawton writes that “the war took place because the President would not accept Secession and resolved to prevent it by force. In this slavery did not enter.”¹⁸ Lincoln’s own comments on saving the Union, with or without mentioning slavery, are too well known to require extensive reiteration here. Indeed, the most extreme Conservatives in the South, the Southern Unionists, were as a group pro-slavery, and like the Unionist coalition Lincoln built in the North, believed the Union to be the main issue.¹⁹

If the issue was between mere preservation of a Union unwanted in the South and self-determination for the Confederacy, it is hard to see how libertarians can fail to sympathize—on this one issue—with the fundamentally defensive posture of the CSA. Indeed, many Northerners initially felt that letting the South go was the only solution. In the Middle Atlantic states there existed broad sympathy for Southern independence in addition to support for a Middle Atlantic Confederacy.²⁰ (This factor of Northern good will and hesitation was wasted by the CSA, particularly the legalistic Davis, who insisted on taking Fort Sumter instead of outwaiting the adroit Lincoln.) Even a few abolitionists, among the most consistent libertarians of their day, opposed a war to preserve the Union.²¹ This group included George Bassett, Moncure Conway, and Lysander Spooner, later an individualist anarchist.

Concrete interests of state power combined with the potent ideology of nationalism, then, account for the Lincoln administration’s policy of war and subjugation. Unsurprisingly, the political and ideological reasons were inextricably intertwined with economic motives. The speed with which the Republicans used the absence of Southern representation in Congress to pass the entire long-standing Federalist/Whig program of neo-mercantilism and subsidies to Northern industry (tariffs, excises, greenbacks, National Bank) attests to one set of interests. The anti-war, antislavery libertarian writer Lysander Spooner wrote in 1870 that the War had been supported by

Northern business to secure "a control of the markets in the South; in other words, the privilege of holding the slave-holders themselves in industrial and commercial subjection to the manufacturers and merchants of the North. . . ."22 As a consequence, all pretense of government by "consent" had been abandoned, and a sort of "national slavery" of all to Washington and Big Business had ensued.

An especially important economic motive behind Middle Western support for Lincoln's policy of coercion and forcible union was the fear on the part of export-conscious farming interests that the new Confederacy would restrict their use of the Mississippi River by holding New Orleans. Fearing denial of access to world markets, these early export imperialists chose to subdue rather than negotiate with the South on this matter. The Confederacy early sought to allay such fears by passing a law guaranteeing perpetual free use of the river, but the North found this insufficient.²³

Since the War had the result of freeing the slaves, emancipation is added in as the ultimate justification of the War (part of the confusion of results with "causes" common to "Civil War" historiography). In some quarters Lincoln's limited charter of freedom proves the virtue of preserving the Union. But as the London *Spectator* unkindly remarked, "The principle is not that a human being cannot justly own another, but that he cannot own him unless he is loyal to the United States." Richard Hofstadter observes that the "Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863 had all the moral grandeur of a bill of lading."²⁴ Where it might have freed slaves, it didn't, merely proclaiming the Confederates' slaves free. Of course for gaining psychological momentum and international support for the North it was a masterstroke. It filled up the "Treasury of Virtue" (in Robert Penn Warren's phrase), armed with which the reunited Union could then forcefully confront foreign sin and un-American modes of behavior everywhere.

It is hard, indeed, not to view emancipation as the war measure Lincoln always said it was. Certainly, given the pervasiveness of strong racist feelings North and South,²⁵ it is hard to picture the North as seriously undertaking the grand crusade for (inseparable) Freedom and Union of National-Liberal historiography. With such doubts in mind, the internal Confederate debate over emancipation growing out of a desire to field Black Confederate troops and influence world opinion has about as much (or as little) moral stature as Northern measures.²⁶ Characteristically, the Confederates were a couple of years too late, but subjugation seems a high price for such tardiness.

And yet slavery was "central" in many ways. But that does not make the War a choice between freedom and slavery so much as a set of choices between freedoms and slaveries. Howard Zinn writes that

it was not the antihuman, immoral aspect of the institution which brought all the weight of national power against it; it was the antitariff,

antibank, anticapitalist, antinational aspect of slavery which aroused the united opposition of the only groups in the country with power to make war: the national political leaders and the controllers of the national economy.²⁷

From the standpoint of all that was at stake, Lincoln's unwillingness to discuss anything but reunion at the Hampton Roads "peace conference" of January 30, 1865 is most revealing. A government sincerely bent on exporting the "bourgeois Revolution" to the South, as one popular interpretation has it, and primarily committed to abolition, would have offered the Confederacy independence in exchange for Confederate emancipation of the slaves.²⁸

Despite the moral ambiguities of "imperial emancipation," one important school of historians views the Northern armies as the vanguard of Revolution. While differing widely among themselves as to detail and emphasis, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Charles and Mary Beard, and Barrington-Moore, Jr. all present the "Civil War" as a Revolution inflicted on the South by a half-way radical Yankee social coalition. Instead of mere preservation of the Union and an idealistic freeing of the slaves, these National Radicals see a conscious bourgeois Revolution as an inevitable feature of the historical process which brought the backward, "agrarian," "pre-modern" South into line with the newfangled Yankee model.²⁹

Unfortunately, this seems, once again, to confound intentions and results. Certainly a devastating war will have "revolutionary" effects on a defeated political and social order; and certainly there was *some* purely humanitarian sentiment in the North in favor of abolition together with the understanding on the part of the Radical Republicans that emancipation would destroy the social and economic "basis" of the existing Southern leadership. But to call the War a "Revolution" makes as much sense, by itself, as calling a hurricane a "Revolution" because it does a lot of damage and causes a lot of change. Even bringing in the one group of Congressional Radicals and some scattered ideas, this dubious equation surely bypasses the crucial point that war came because Southerners directly repudiated federal "sovereignty" in the South.

With all its impact, the War was the result of a revolution in public opinion and political institutions, just as the American Revolution in a real sense was not the war of 1776-1783 but, as John Adams wrote, the struggle leading up to the Declaration of Independence; but the Revolution was in the South—in the decades-long agitation of "fire-eaters" and Southern nationalists like Ruffin, Yancey, Rhett and Toombs, in the secession conventions and in the peaceful organization of the CSA. "Reactionary" or not, the organization of the CSA was nonetheless an authentic Revolution, and the Federal Government's decision to suppress that Revolution caused the

War.³⁰ To assume One Nation which suffered a "civil war" or Northern-led bourgeois Revolution is to anticipate the *outcome* of the War and once again to evade the issue of self-determination and disunion.

Even accepting the somewhat shaky thesis of Northern revolutionary "aims," there is still the oft-debated problem of exporting Revolution by outside intervention. Had the US Government gone into Vietnam with the sincerest Kennedy-Liberal intentions of forcing the bourgeois-democratic Revolution on the Saigon politicians, important questions would still remain. In all probability, revolution from the outside is the most costly and counterproductive, not to mention least revolutionary, approach to revolution. The characterization of the War as Revolution raises the very important issue of "modern 'Bonapartism,' that is, . . . a confusion between a war of conquest and revolutionary war." The Yugoslav revolutionary theoretician Edvard Kardelj terms imperialist export of revolution "social Bonapartism" and criticizes it as totally foreign to true revolutionary policy. The true policy is peaceful coexistence and national self-determination. Kardelj notes that "it is primarily the internal, objective and subjective conditions of each individual country that prompt this or that path or resolution of social contradictions."³¹

Imperialist war strengthens statism and destroys the material welfare of the people. As such, it is profoundly antirevolutionary, no matter how it unsettles the defeated enemy society. It may create opportunities for revolutionary breakthroughs, but it is hardly revolutionary itself. Wars may be connected with revolution, follow upon revolutions, or unleash revolutions; but to call the Northern denial of Southern self-determination the Revolution is surely a bad joke. Given the profoundly conservative motives for the War (preserve the federal government as it was, retain markets, preserve slavery if possible), we can fairly conclude that the North fought the War for the wrong reasons. If anything worthwhile was achieved, it was largely by accident. (Many abolitionists, who had long called for Northern and Southern separation, reversed themselves, opportunistically hoping for emancipation as a war measure.)

The Northern government began the War to restore the state of affairs, including slavery, which had preceded the Confederate Revolution. War came when it did because the obtuse Davis, blessed with a strong streak of legalism, refused to tolerate Yankee retention of a fort in Confederate "territorial waters." The more revolutionary Toombs of Georgia warned Davis that taking the fort by force would, given the irrationalities of "flags" and other tinsel symbols of the state, rally support behind Lincoln's policy of coercion and drive Northern peace sentiment underground. On this, I cannot resist quoting Francis Butler Simkins: "with a subtlety approaching the diabolical, [Lincoln] provoked the Confederates into firing upon Fort

Sumter in order to solidify Northern public opinion.”³²

Despite Northern identification of Unionist nationalism with the world-historical fate of liberalism, we need to reassess the Confederacy for the possibilities its Revolution opened up.³³ Perhaps in addition to seeing the issue of self-determination and the human, material and institutional damage inflicted by war as “negative” reasons for supporting the CSA, we may find positive reasons in the Confederate Revolution itself.

IV. 1776 and 1861: Lost Opportunities, Unrealized Possibilities, and Confederate Scenarios

Why did Southerners launch a separatist Revolution in 1860–61? The reasons are many, but include at least the following: 1) Fear that the 1860 victory of the sectional Republican party meant that it would be only a matter of time before the North excluded slaveholders from the western territories; with the resulting loss of parity in the Senate, serious Northern interference with the South’s internal affairs would begin. 2) The desire of cadres of radicalized petty slaveholders, especially in the Gulf states, to cheapen costs of getting into the system by reopening the (illegal) African slave trade and expanding south and westward; this reflected a kind of perverse “petty bourgeois radicalism” for slaveholders! All this required secession. 3) Feelings of apartness from and enmity towards the North based on cultural, material and political conflicts (the 30-year “cold war”). 4) An intense localism (caricatured in the story of the North Carolina rebel who, asked by Yankees what he was fighting for, replied “Because you all are down here!”), and 5) connected with this, a desire by both existing elites and “new men” to exercise local self-government. 6) The honest belief that the Constitution was a voluntary compact between sovereign states and that secession, while a revolutionary remedy, was also *legal* and in line with the republican genius. (The Beards allow that “the secessionists had somewhat the better of the rhetorical side of the battle.”)³⁴

Finally, the political culture of the South played an important role. An important tool for studying the Confederate movement is the concept of *Weltanschauung*, defined by William Appleman Williams as a “definition of the world combined with an explanation of how it works.”³⁵ In addition to material and class interests it behooves us to be aware of the ideas *on hand* within which debate took place, and the inner logic and direction of the ideas themselves. In the South, despite efforts by slavery apologists like George Fitzhugh to home-brew organicist outlooks, the common political language was still the libertarian republicanism of 1776 and the related but older “Country ideology.”

Country ideology, with its strong emphasis on the armed proprietor on

the land as the bulwark of a free society, was ambiguous enough to appeal to a section of the English gentry, and later, to a cross-section of property-owning Southern whites. As a *Weltanschauung* close to but preceding economic liberalism, Country thought could take on a "semifeudal" or "revolutionary capitalist" form depending on concrete circumstances.³⁶ With John Taylor of Caroline, it was neatly poised between its prebourgeois and bourgeois possibilities, but after the American Revolution the "agrarian" theme gradually came to dominate because of slave agriculture (except in the *purely political* thought of Alexander H. Stephens).

The South retained the Country emphasis on individualism, ownership and local self-rule as the North moved towards a unitary democratic nationalism (a handy cover for centralizing state capitalism). Adherence to 18th-century ideas made it easy for Southern secessionists to identify themselves with earlier Southern rebels against George III. In these terms, it seems reasonable to see in the Revolution of 1861 a continuation, however off-course and "reactionary," of 1776. The Janus-faced character of Southern thought is worth bearing in mind when assessing the longer-range revolutionary potentials latent in the Confederate enterprise. Beyond that, revolutions once begun for whatever cause have a way of getting out of hand, creating unexpected opportunities. William Appleman Williams observes that "The great virtue of revolutions is that they create the circumstances in which a society's problems *can* be solved."³⁷

With that in mind, let us take a fresh look at the CSA, keeping in mind that, as Martin Duberman writes, "if we are to profit from historical experience it is . . . 'speculative' questions which must be raised."³⁸ Southern independence, whether achieved peacefully or by successful defensive war, held out the risks and possibilities of major internal change. In 1861, Jefferson Davis said privately that "In any case, I think our slave property will be lost eventually."³⁹ The war for independence forced many Southerners to put independence ahead of slavery and readied them to sacrifice one to the other.⁴⁰ But even without the structural strains of war, *de facto* independence would have begun to undermine slavery. For one thing, there would no longer have been any certainty of recovering runaway slaves after they had escaped into the North. This alone, would have constituted a major problem for the slave regime.

As a practical matter, the new Confederate government, still organizing itself and with more limited resources to draw on, would have been a weaker protector of slavery than the old Federal government. Institutionally, the Confederate Constitution of March 11, 1861 (the "permanent" as opposed to "provisional" Constitution) provided for a general government with noticeably fewer powers; thus the CSA Congress could not set up tariffs, grant bounties, or provide for internal improvements. Overall, the Constitution

embodied a *laissez faire* conception of the role of the Confederate government as against the mercantilism of the old Constitution. Even on slavery, the Constitution was no worse than the US Constitution, and did prohibit the foreign slave trade (a victory over the radical pro-slave trade element).⁴¹ It is curious indeed that if the slaveholders enjoyed undisputed political and economic hegemony, as Eugene D. Genovese believes, and were busily putting the finishing touches on their paternalistic "seigneurial" *Weltanschauung*, the Confederate movement showed such dedication to Country and *laissez faire* shibboleths. Perhaps the socioeconomic and political reality of the South reflected the interests of a powerful slaveholding class and something *more*. In contrast to the framers of the CSA's basic law, George Fitzhugh derided the South's whiggish, Country, and liberal heritage, and would have preferred a unitary, powerful state to consolidate a sort of agrarian national socialism. (Interestingly, few took him up on it.)

In addition to the persistence of Country ideology, the decades preceding secession had witnessed considerable political democratization, especially in the lower South; Mississippi, Alabama and probably Georgia experienced the most change, with South Carolina and Virginia remaining the most tightly oligarchic.⁴² This democratization had important implications for the class situation of the middling and poor whites—perhaps the most unstudied class in American historiography. Some democratization had taken place, whatever the distribution of property within the white group,⁴³ and it may be that Stanley Elkins is right in arguing that the slaveholders' ideological and material position was increasingly weak by 1860. Hence, their secession and participation in a separatist revolution reflected their insecurity, even "paranoia" upon the election of Lincoln.⁴⁴

If there is anything to this, a major truism of the National-Liberal school falls by the wayside. For, given the weakness of the slaveholders (and their important intraclass conflicts), the weakening of slavery by independence and the moral isolation of the CSA from civilized opinion, one wonders how long the supposedly "prebourgeois" cotton and tobacco entrepreneurs could have staved off the South's own internal bourgeois-peasant-(possibly slave) Revolution. Till 1870? 1884?

With the persistence of Country ideology, to which even the slaveholders gave hostage, the fairly weak and decentralized character of the political structure, and internal criticism (now that the North could not be held responsible for everything), an independent Confederacy would probably have seen the outbreak of revolutionary struggle at two extremes: One, the areas with fewest slaves, where non-slaveholding whites had little real interest in slavery and less racial fear of emancipation (roughly the "border" states, hill country and upper inland South), and, two, the Deep South Black Belt where by sheer numbers action by the slaves themselves might have

been possible. (It won't do, as John Rosenberg notes, to assume that a slave revolt could never have taken place.) Northern abolitionists and libertarians could have given moral and material aid to the Southern "bourgeois" Revolution without involving North and South in a major war. The fact that the more "visible" Southern bourgeoisie had in effect "sold out" to the large planters would probably have been no major impediment: when has the "bourgeois" Revolution ever had to wait on the initial support of the entire urban bourgeoisie? Perhaps liberated areas could have been established in the Black Belt, as bases from which to push a white coalition into emancipation. The willingness of the historical CSA to consider emancipation in pursuit of independence and the "universal relief" felt in the South after Northern imperial emancipation⁴⁵ suggests that, save for the biggest planters, Southerners may not have regarded slavery as so basic after all—provided they could resolve it themselves. Thus, the South's internal Revolution after independence was probably inevitable.

This speculative "revisionist" view differs greatly from the revisionist scenario of the 1930's. That school argued that slavery would have fallen from purely economic-evolutionary causes if only everyone had kept their cool and avoided secession. In the present view, the "profitability" of slavery is largely irrelevant (except as it influenced individuals), preservation of the Union is not assumed as a necessity, and revolutionary methods are not ruled out of order. Seen in this light, the present view is "pro-Southern" and anti-nationalist but does not involve approval of all, or even very many, aspects of the historical Confederacy. Eugene D. Genovese notes that "If a radical regional revolution and the genuine liberation of black people were to be effected, the slaveholders as a class would have had to be exterminated."⁴⁶ Since this class was probably not as monolithic as Genovese thinks, the task of convincing slaveholders to give up that status might have involved both nonviolent and violent forms of pressure.

This seems especially true in view of the possibility that many Southerners, including slaveholders, simply had not convinced themselves of the morality of slavery. This was due in part to the libertarian legacy of Jefferson and 1776. Hence the frantic efforts by proslavery spokesmen to "firm up" their own people, reflecting the vulnerability and weakness of slavery in the face of the South's own inherited *Weltanschauung*. Bell Irvin Wiley believes that "a sense of guilt about slavery"⁴⁷ contributed to the decline of Confederate morale during the latter part of the War. Hence an uncompromising assault by abolitionists in an independent South might have converted a cross-section of whites, including some advanced slave-holders (on the model of James Birney), in the normal pattern of revolutionary alignments.

The North Carolina antislavery radical Hinton R. Helper put it this way:

"Numerically considered, it will be perceived that the slaveholders are, in reality, a very insignificant class."⁴⁸ Hence, according to Genovese,

Many Southern nonslaveholders could be and were converted to the antislavery banner once they found themselves away from the power and influence of the slaveholders. Charles Robinson bitterly criticized John Brown for his inability to appreciate the possibilities of persuasion: "While our free state colonies were trying to convert the whites from the South and make them sound free state men, John Brown thought it better to murder them."⁴⁹

Thus the CSA might have experienced the same "emergence of abolitionism near plantations, slaves running away in large numbers, and the gradual disintegration of control over the black population," which took place in Brazil in the 1880s.⁵⁰

The mental anguish of a slaveholding Confederacy with a Country-libertarian heritage, the material interests of nonslaveholding whites, and even action by the slaves themselves would finally have split the South. In opposing "semifeudal" planter-capitalism the Southern Revolution would probably have been soundly "bourgeois" and libertarian; the very ideological "backwardness" which had made secession possible would have saved the South from the pitfalls of later Third World Revolutions.⁵¹ And perhaps the Southern bourgeois Revolution would have been an inspiration for a more libertarian Revolution in Mexico later on.

The point is simply that a Southern solution of the Confederacy's major ills was well within the realm of possibility. Thus the point is not to condemn the "fire-eaters" and small planters on-the-make for their short-sighted commitment to slavery expansionism in 1860-61. The point was to get these politically revolutionary yeomen onto the path of social Revolution.⁵² The guerrilla spirit of the rank and file even in the regular Confederate army reflected the revolutionary potential of the yeomanry, and it is not amiss to recall once more the radical nerve exposed by Southern populism.

Returning to the historical Confederacy, it seems clear that, contrary to established views, the CSA died of overcentralization, West Point strategy (as Robert Toombs said), and very "unSouthern" policies of "war socialism" which wasted the morale of the people. The Confederate Revolution suffered an early "Thermidor" at the Montgomery convention which dispossessed the secessionist cadre (Rhett, Yancey *et al.*, who probably had few positive ideas of what to do, anyway) and put legalistic conservatives like Davis in charge. (Davis *did* emerge as a nationalist, however.) The ever more desperate reliance by Richmond on measures such as conscription, large armies, bureaucracy, taxes in kind, tithes, confiscations, socialization of the cotton crop, paper money inflation (the usual "forced loan," but the CSA never made its paper "legal tender"!) profoundly alienated the people and failed to achieve their purposes.⁵³

Recognizing the unpopularity of these measures, most historians criticize the people; Unionists pityingly dismiss Richmond's war effort as not measuring up to Lincolnian statism, Southerners indignantly denounce their side's perverse state-rights fetish. Collect more taxes, install more bureaucrats, draft more hillbillies, print more money, seize more crops, shoot more deserters, suspend more *habeas corpus*, declare martial law, override the Governors, and stretch the Constitution—this is supposed to have been the road to victory. (It would have been, had the CSA been fighting an unpopular war in Afghanistan.)

The CSA probably had a slightly better wartime civil liberties record than the Union—due in part to the efforts of the Confederate Opposition, especially the Georgia group, Alexander Stephens, his brother Linton, Robert Toombs and Governor Joe Brown, and Zebulon Vance in North Carolina. This Confederate “Left” has been dismissed for clinging to extreme libertarian views (against conscription, centralization, and the rest). (Poor Joe Brown stands accused as a Georgia Firster, though he merely anticipated Truong Chinh: “When the enemy comes we fight, when he goes away we plough.”) By remaining true to Country thought and the CSA Constitution, the “Left” stood for a virtual guerrilla war against the Yankees—a strategy compatible with the nature of Southern white society and values.

In a brilliant essay Robert L. Kerby maintains that this guerrilla model might have won the War by putting the natural advantages and “backwardness” of the South to work. Contrary to Emory Thomas, who sees the “Revolution” in the bureaucratic Southern nationalism of Richmond, Kerby considers centralization “an ideological and institutional obstacle inhibiting the achievement of revolutionary aims.” Had the CSA really followed its own rhetoric about local liberties and initiative, it could have used existing infrastructures and militia to conduct a people's war against the Yankees. Instead, as Stephens said at the time, Richmond's conservative nationalists betrayed the revolutionary instincts of the people and squandered their enthusiasm.⁵⁴

As a result, by 1864 the Confederate “Left” had adopted a posture of “revolutionary defeatism”—preferring negotiation with the North to Richmond's “despotism.” The guerrilla model, had it been more widely applied, carries interesting implications for our “second phase” of the white Revolution. Since slavery was weakened by the actual struggle, it seems likely that a guerrilla war, begun in 1861, would have undermined slavery even more rapidly by destabilizing pre-war society.⁵⁵ (This may partially explain Richmond's reluctance to adopt it.) If even the conservatives eventually came to consider abandoning slavery, it seems possible that the more radical *guerrilleros* would have seen the light sooner (this assumes that the libertarian sheep were separable from the petty-slaveholding wolves).

If any of these evaluations of the Confederate Revolutions—real and

possible—are near the mark, libertarians and radicals will have many more reasons for “supporting” the CSA. The contrast between what seems possible for an independent Confederacy (and what was beginning to happen) and what Northern victory, and the uses to which that victory was put, in fact imposed upon the South will doubtless provide further lessons along the same lines. It may be that the defeat of legitimate Southern aspirations for autonomy was indeed one of the worst possible outcomes for all concerned.

V. The World the Yankees Made: The Costs, Moral, Material, Institutional and Ideological, of “Preserving the Union”

The antebellum American federation was so extensive geographically, so “unbuilt” nationwide, so composed of differing interests (which Madison deluded himself into thinking would prevent “faction”), and so unsettled relative to the weak but ambitious central bureaucracies that in truth there was in 1860 “no Union to save.”⁵⁶ A sensible, and highly libertarian, solution would have been peaceful construction of two or more smaller federations in an area so large. Unfortunately, this outcome was effectively precluded by Northern victory in 1865. The government at Washington, true to the political and material motives behind the War, reduced the South to a permanent internal economic colony, emancipating the slaves almost as an afterthought. Nothing suggests so clearly the major forces at work as what occurred when the North finally could have done some good with its victory—e.g., giving land to the freedmen. Then the Yankees’ Historical Locomotive suddenly stood revealed as the Amtrak of History. Even most of the “Radicals” in the North were primarily motivated by sheer vindictiveness against the “rebellion,” the need to secure electoral votes in the South (hence disfranchisement of whites and Negro suffrage), the desire to sustain and extend the wartime political economy of high tariffs, favors to railroads (the *real* Locomotive of History), paper money, subsidies to Northeastern industry and banks, and the like, and, at best, only a minimal “social Bonapartism.”

Northern conduct of its “total war,” the glorious campaigns of Sherman, Sheridan and their ilk, and the postbellum ordeal of “Reconstruction” (with the Black man as dupe and later victim) fastened upon the South an enervating economic stagnation, rule by local “overseers” for the Yankee capitalists, and perhaps worst of all, a mind-set which became “one of the least *reconstructible* ever developed.”⁵⁷ To this may be added the enormous cost in lives and real property, capital decumulation, aggravated racism, bad precedents for the “saved” Union like conscription, and the neo-plantation system of crop-liens, tenant farmers (Black and white) and the rural merchants (a real “human erosion system” as A.B. Moore called it). Small

wonder that the South became the political-economic nigger of the Nation, famed for poverty, disease, Protestant zanies, random violence, Sahara of the Bozarts—working off its frustrations in keeping the Blacks as the mudsill, Jim Crowing and lynching, providing cheap cannon fodder and venal politicians to underwrite future imperialist ventures desired by the Northeastern masters.

The question naturally arises: Could the Confederacy, even on a more pessimistic reading of the possibilities than the one given here, possibly have done worse? Williams decries the fact that “the Southerners won their battle against the freed black man and lost their fight against political and economic vassalage.”⁵⁸ But given the defeat of the Confederacy what else could have been expected? Genovese puts the essential relationship thus:

Since abolition occurred under Northern guns and under the program of a victorious, predatory outside bourgeoisie, instead of under internal bourgeois auspices, the colonial bondage of the economy was preserved, but the South’s political independence was lost.⁵⁹

Of course much more than this came of Confederate defeat. Emory Thomas writes that since the Union “eradicated the rebel nation” everything “that was positive in the Confederate experience went down with all that was negative.” Reconstruction only succeeded “in frustrating the positive elements of the revolutionary Southern experience” so that “[t]he bitterness of Reconstruction outlasted the bitterness of the war,” surviving “in the persistent myth of ‘black Reconstruction.’” The New South—that pragmatic compromise between Northern power and local collaborators—was thus “the thermidor of the Confederate revolutions” and “nothing is so striking about the New South as its resemblance to the Old South.”⁶⁰

Even if we dispute Thomas’ identification of the Revolution with the integral nationalism of Davis, it is certain that Northern victory precluded independence (the first Revolution) and with it the possibility of the second and third (white and black) Southern Revolutions; this was done without providing a suitable substitute, save for a feeble “social Bonapartist” impulse—itself undone by state-corporatist forces. It seems to be a rule of modern history that bourgeois Revolutions defeated and postponed tend to emerge later in distorted, stunted, racist and “fascist” forms; imperialism typically causes its victims to cling to bad institutions and ideas (far more than mere interest would). Thus when a partial white revolutionary impulse emerged in the South decades after the War—the “revolt of the rednecks”—egalitarianism for whites advanced at the expense of Blacks who suffered increased abuses from local institutions which they could not even influence.

Post-1865 developments seem to weigh heavily against the National Radical view that a “revolutionary” Yankee coalition narrowly averted a

classic reactionary “marriage of Iron and Rye” which an independent South supposedly would have established. If anything, the truth seems to be just the opposite. Lincoln’s War, by arresting social change in the South and confining it within acceptable limits, led to exactly the sort of “Iron and Rye” syndrome that Barrington Moore, Jr., misapplying the comparative data, believes it prevented. What else, after all, was the “New South” all about? The correct analogy, I would suggest, runs along these lines: The North and Prussia unified their respective loose confederations of states and petty principalities by “blood and iron”; as a result, *local* bourgeois Revolutions in both countries were frustrated. In both societies bureaucrats and bureaucrat-capitalists exploited southern regions as internal colonies. Social change accelerated by hothouse state capitalism and war piled up revolutionary tinder which exploded in “fascist” episodes, “blood and iron” yielding “blood and soil.” Finally, both episodes ended with the “reconstruction” of the offending societies by their enemies and their reintegration into imperialist systems—Germany by the World War II Allies, albeit into East and West Germanies, the South by the “Second Reconstruction” after 1954.⁶¹

The genuinely revolutionary Black movement of recent decades has been coopted and “contained” ideologically and materially by national political-economic elites, just as was the earlier “redneck revolt (and how can one build “nationalism” without real access to *land*?). Nonetheless, the Second Reconstruction may have caused a partial revival of “Southern consciousness” which shows some chance of surviving its immediate circumstances. As further crises pile up, in the political economy, and imperial foreign policy further discredits itself, then perhaps the issue of internal colonialism can once more be raised and a great continental empire held together only by Federal baling wire, “nationalist” sentiment, and a dying commitment to “anticommunism” can begin coming unraveled along lines favorable to local autonomy and human liberty.⁶² If such developments ever happen, then Southerners—Black and white—cannot but profit from reconsideration of the Confederate past and its unrealized possibilities. Such analysis is surely needed, so that if—as Charlie Daniels has it—“the South’s gonna do it again,” we do it right for once!

NOTES

1. As John Rosenberg has pointed out, the issue of “presentism” is fundamentally a red herring designed to keep historians from undertaking seriously radical revisions. In any event, sympathetic reevaluation of the Confederate Revolution may involve further heresies. Thus it happened that some young Southerners in the 1960s, aware of Union atrocities in the War of 1861–65, easily accepted a radical anti-war viewpoint on Vietnam, knowing that Washington is capable of anything. It would surely take a paladin of the Nationalist persuasion to sort out the “pastism” or “presentism” in *that* connection.

2. The phrase is William Appleman Williams', from *The Contours of American History* (New York, 1973), pp. 19–20.
3. Richard H. Shryock, "The Nationalist Tradition of the Civil War: A Southern Analysis," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XXXII (1933), p. 305.
4. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "The Causes of the Civil War: A Note on Historical Sentimentalism," *Partisan Review*, XVI (Oct., 1949), pp. 469–481.
5. I designate the school of Lincoln and his historical defenders as "National-Liberals" because, like the Imperial German party of that name, they subordinated the whole range of liberties to the building and preservation of a specific nation-state; unfortunately "set aside for the duration," these liberties never seem to be revived in full flower in the face of the expanded state.
6. Jacob Burckhardt, *Force and Freedom: Reflections on History*, ed. James Hastings Nichols (Boston, 1964), pp. 116–117. As someone who could write that "power is in itself evil" (115), Burckhardt was probably a maverick liberal, falsely claimed in the 20th century by rudderless Conservatives.
7. Lord Acton, *Essays in the Liberal Interpretation of History*, ed. William Hardy McNeill (Chicago, 1967), "Inaugural Lecture on the Study of History," p. 351.
8. By now libertarians should need no convincing on these points, but for completeness (and for nonlibertarians) a basis for such an "unAmerican" critique is in William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1962), Richard J. Barnet, *The Intervention and Revolution* (New York, 1972), and Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., *The Decline of American Liberalism* (New York, 1969).
9. David M. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa" in *The South and the Sectional Conflict* (Baton Rouge, 1968), 34–83. For a summary of quite real Southern differences, some of them caused by the War of 1861–65, see Richard M. Weaver, "The Southern Tradition," *New Individualist Review*, III, 3 (1964), pp. 7–17.
10. Having flunked the CSA's candidacy, the National-Liberal historians tend to drop the whole thing instead of consistently investigating instances of *greater* cultural differentiation. There will be no autonomy, apparently, for Cajuns, Mexicans of the southwest, 19th-century Mormons in Utah, or Amerindians. More pertinent, how can we "justify" the Revolution of 1776, since the colonies were as English culturally as the Canadians who remained loyal? It is a mystery, traceable perhaps to Great Yankee Chauvinism.
11. On the deep-dyed radicalism of Southern (as opposed to Western) populism, see C. Vann Woodward, *The Origins of the New South, 1877–1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), p. 200, as well as the treatment given in pages 175–290.
12. *Omnipotent Government* (New Haven, 1944), p. 90, also pp. 89–96.
13. On the secessionist argument and logic, see Joseph R. Stromberg, "Secession, the Essence of Anarchy," *Libertarian Forum*, IX, 6 (June, 1976), 3–7.
14. "Toward A New Civil War Revisionism" in Gerald N. Grob and George Athan Billias, eds., *Interpretations of American History*, I (New York, 1972), p. 478. The piece appeared first in *The American Scholar*, XXXVIII, 2 (Spring, 1969).
15. "Support" for any imperfect cause may only boil down to who we "cheer for." Cf. Murray N. Rothbard, "When Revolution?" *Libertarian Forum*, II, 19 (Oct. 1, 1970), pp. 1, 4.
16. Edward P. Lawton, *The South and the Nation* (Fort Myers Beach, Fla., 1963), pp. 66–69, and Williams, *Contours*, p. 285. Lawton is a former member of the US diplomatic corps and a humane, perceptive and fairly libertarian Southern "conservative." His book, a defense presented as an indictment of the North, has naturally been entirely neglected. He could not find a "national" publisher for it.
17. *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776–1976* (New York, 1976), p. 113. The entire chapter, "Honest Abe and the First Crusade to Save the Present," merits close attention.
18. *The South and the Nation*, p. 42.
19. On the Southern Unionists, see Carl Degler, *The Other South: Southern Dissenters in the 19th Century* (Harper & Row, 1974).
20. See William C. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States* (Cranbury, N.J., 1973).

21. See Rosenberg, "A New Civil War Revisionism," 470-471.
22. Lysander Spooner, *No Treason: The Constitution of No Authority*, ed. James J. Martin, (Larkspur, Colo., 1966), pp. 50-51, and 52-54.
23. William Appleman Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire* (New York, 1969), pp. 101-102, and Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, ed. E.S. Miers (New York, 1961), p. 127. For other Northern economic motives for war, see Barrington Moore, Jr., *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston, 1966), Ch. 3, "The American Civil War: The Last Capitalist Revolution," pp. 111-155.
24. Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition* (New York, 1948), p. 132. It was, in fact, remarkably like the proclamation of Lord Dunmore, Royal Governor of Virginia, in November, 1775, which offered freedom to Blacks who would fight for the King. Only slaves "appertaining to rebels" were to benefit. See Donald L. Robinson, *Slavery in the Structure of American Politics, 1765-1820* (New York, 1971), pp. 103-107. Query: Would a more positive British emancipation policy have made the King's cause "revolutionary" and "just"?
25. For the racism of the Republicans, the movers and shakers of the war policies, see Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men* (New York, 1970), pp. 261-300.
26. See Robert F. Durden, *The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation* (Baton Rouge, 1972).
27. "Abolitionists, Freedom-Riders and the Tactics of Agitation," in *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists*, ed. Martin Duberman (Princeton, 1965), p. 445.
28. Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens wrote later that Lincoln's attitude toward the freedmen, which he expressed at Hampton Roads, was "Let 'em root." Not too revolutionary! See Alexander H. Stephens, *Recollections*, ed. Myrta L. Avary (New York, 1910), p. 137.
29. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Civil War in the United States* (New York, 1961), Charles and Mary Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (New York, 1930), Ch. XVIII, "The Second American Revolution," pp. 52-121, and Moore, "The American Civil War." Eric Foner sums up the more recent literature in "The Causes of the American Civil War: Recent Interpretations and New Directions," *Civil War History*, XX, 3 (September, 1974), pp. 201-214. The authors Foner deals with tend to define "modernization" as adoption of neo-mercantilist, state corporatist institutions. Apparently, he who wants commerce must also want a Bank of England and Board of Trade. *Laissez faire* liberalism is relegated to the basement of "agrarianism" and the free-trading South falls by the historical wayside. More evidence that nothing succeeds like the victors' definition of success.
30. Movements out of step with the *Zeitgeist*, no matter how radical in practice, usually get excluded from the list of "real" Revolutions. For new approaches to the CSA, see Emory Thomas, *The Confederacy as A Revolutionary Experience* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1971), Frank E. Vandiver, "The Confederacy and the American Tradition," *Journal of Southern History*, XXVIII, 3 (Aug., 1962), pp. 277-286; "Jefferson Davis: Leader Without Legend," *ibid.*, XLIII (Feb., 1977), pp. 3-18, and William Appleman Williams, "Honest Abe and the First Crusade." Needless to say, these approaches are not the last word in an interesting new area.
Lee Benson gives a very convincing critique of several National Radical interpretations of the War, esp. Moore's "bourgeois Revolution" thesis, in *Towards the Scientific Study of History* (New York, 1972), Ch. 8, "Explanations of American Civil War Causation," pp. 225-340. Benson stresses the development of a separatist political revolution in the South, but as a nationalist he lays the onus of war on the South—since the maintenance of the Union is not debatable.
31. Edvard Kardelj, *Socialism and War* (New York, 1960), pp. 82, 86; also 32-40, 44, 80-97, 98-109, 119, 134-139. Kardelj's essay reflects a highly libertarian approach to peaceful coexistence and "revolution by example only"; many passages could have been written by Richard Cobden, Robert Taft or Michael Bakunin. For a very similar approach, see Murray N. Rothbard, "War, Peace and the State," in *Egalitarianism as a Revolt against Nature* (Washington, 1974), pp. 70-80.

32. F.B. Simkins, *A History of the South* (New York, 1963), p. 213. Pearl Harbor buffs will recall Secretary Stimson's famous remark on "maneuvering" Japan into firing the first shot.
33. David Potter, "The Civil War in the History of the Modern World: A Comparative View" in *The South and the Sectional Conflict*, pp. 287-299, notes that the Yankees "fused [liberalism and nationalism] so thoroughly that their potential separateness was lost from view" (298). Rather an understatement in the age of the US empire.
34. See F.B. Simkins, *A History of the South*, Chs. XIII, XIV; E. Merton Coulter, *The Confederate States of America 1861-1865* (LSU, 1950), Chs. I, II, III; on the radical slaveholders, see Ronald T. Takaki, *A Proslavery Argument* (Glencoe, Ill., 1971) and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery* (New York, 1961); on the "cold war," see David Potter, *The South and the Sectional Conflict*, William Appleman Williams, *Contours*, pp. 284-300; Emory Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience*; Jefferson Davis, *Rise and Fall*, Charles and Mary Beard, *Rise of American Civilization*, p. 47; consult, as well, the works on the secession conventions.
35. *Contours*, 20.
36. On Country ideology, see J.G.A. Pocock, "Machiavelli, Harrington, and English Political Ideologies in the 18th Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXII, 4 (Oct., 1965), pp. 549-583, and *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, 1975), Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle* (Cambridge, 1968), Staughton Lynd, *Class Conflict, Slavery and the United States Constitution* (New York, 1967), pp. 258-267; Robert E. Shalhope, "Toward a Republican Synthesis," *WMQ*, XXIX, 1 (Jan., 1972), pp. 49-80, and Robert M. Weir, "The Harmony We Were Famous For: An Interpretation of Pre-Revolutionary South Carolina Politics," *WMQ*, XXVI, 4 (Oct., 1969), pp. 473-501, and "Review of Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle*," *South Carolina Magazine of History*, LXX, 4 (Oct., 1969).
37. *Contours*, 51. On the reactionary-radical dualism of secessionist thinking, see Stromberg, "Secession, the Essence of Anarchy."
38. *The Profession of History*, p. 21.
39. Quoted in Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World*, p. 118.
40. Thomas, *Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience*, Ch. 7, "Black Confederates: Slavery and Wartime," pp. 119-132, and Durden, *The Gray and the Black*.
41. Coulter, *The Confederate States*, pp. 28-29.
42. See Charles S. Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819-1848*, (Baton Rouge, La., 1948), Ch. XII, pp. 275-293.
43. For the controversy over property ownership by poor whites, see the articles by Robert R. Russel, Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, and Fabian Linden in Harold D. Woodman (ed.), *Slavery and the Southern Economy* (New York, 1966), 117-155.
44. Stanley M. Elkins, "On Eugene D. Genovese's *The Political Economy of Slavery*" in A. Weinstein and F.O. Gatell (eds.), *American Negro Slavery: A Modern Reader* (New York, 1968), pp. 342-347.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 347. Internal abolition, by Revolution or otherwise, would be less costly than organized war and could pinpoint the enemies of change more exactly.
46. Eugene D. Genovese, *In Red and Black* (New York, 1971), p. 313.
47. On these points, see Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism* (New York, 1969), pp. 259-260 and Ralph E. Morrow, "The Proslavery Argument Revisited," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVIII, 1 (June, 1961), pp. 79-94. On the psychology of "extremism," see Takaki, *A Proslavery Argument*. On guilt, Wiley, *The Road to Appomattox* (New York, 1971), pp. 102-105.
48. Hinton R. Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It* (New York, 1860), p. 142.
49. Genovese, *Political Economy of Slavery*, p. 265.
50. Foner, "Causes of the Civil War," p. 211.
51. For the ironic contribution of slavery itself to Southern libertarianism, see Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975). If the South could become less liberal between 1800 and 1860, why could not the reverse happen after independence, within the same overall *Weltanschauung*?

- "Semifeudal" here refers to *structure*. For the ephemeral character of "seigneurial," "neofeudal" ideologies proposed by Fitzhugh and his ilk, see Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York, 1955), Ch. 4, "The Reactionary Enlightenment," pp. 145-200. No one missed Fitzhugh much after emancipation. If Hartz' liberal observations on the superficiality of organicist propoganda are correct, then the National-Liberals' War seems highly unnecessary.
52. Elkins, "On Genovese's *Political Economy of Slavery*," p. 346. For Alexander H. Stephens' view of Southern equality, see *Recollections*, pp. 420-423.
 53. For Confederate statism, see Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., *Decline of American Liberalism*, pp. 116-130 and *The Civilian and the Military* (Colorado Springs, 1972), pp. 104-105; Vandiver, "The Confederacy," Thomas, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience*, esp. pp. 58-78. For defenses of Confederate statism and attacks on the Opposition, see R.S. Henry, *The Story of the Confederacy* (New York, 1964), pp. 414-417; Coulter, *The Confederate States*, pp. 326-328, 390-404, 464-467, 566-567; Frank L. Owsley, *State Rights in the Confederacy* (Chicago, 1925); Simkins, *A History of the South*, pp. 226-227, 232-239, and Burton J. Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause* (New York, 1939)—which are but the tip of an antipopular iceberg.
 54. Robert L. Kerby, "Why the Confederacy Lost," *Review of Politics*, XXXV, 3 (July, 1973), 326-345, quote from 328 (this essay must be read in full to be appreciated). For contemporary criticisms and alternatives, see Stephens, *Recollections*, 64-75, 165-171, 326-334. Certainly Stephens' view that "Our policy was to husband our resources, act on the defensive, keep the people alive to the real cause, and zealous in its maintenance" (350) is the essence of it. Cf. the Maoist slogan "Better soldiers, simpler administration." Whether guerrilla success depended on foreign aid is another matter. (Southerners were already an armed mass.)

For more on the Opposition; see Georgia Lee Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill, 1934), pp. 12-23, 58-59.
 55. On the nature of guerrilla warfare, see John Shy, "The American Revolution: The Military Conflict Considered as a Revolutionary War" in S.G. Kurtz and J.H. Hutson, eds., *Essays on the American Revolution* (New York, 1973), pp. 121-156, and William F. Marina, "Militia, Standing Armies and the Second Amendment," *Law and Liberty*, II, 4 (Spring, 1976), pp. 1-4. On Confederate partisan warfare, see Virgil Carrington Jones, *Gray Ghosts and Rebel Raiders, I* (New York, 1956). The "irregular" units were the stepchild of the army, regarded by R.E. Lee as "an unmixed evil" (xiii).
 56. Williams, *Contours*, p. 300.
 57. W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York, 1941), p. 109. Book II, Ch. I, "Of the Frontier the Yankee Made" is a classic study of Southern reactions to conquest and Reconstruction.
 58. Williams, *Roots of the Modern American Empire*, p. 108.
 59. *Political Economy of Slavery*, p. 37, n. 7.
 60. *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience*, pp. 136-137.
 61. I intend to develop this analogy in more detail in a longer version of this paper.
 62. William Appleman Williams—always in the forefront of constructive radicalism—calls for just such dissolution of old forms at the end of *America Confronts a Revolutionary World*.

On the damage inflicted on the South by the War and Reconstruction, see Lawton, *The South and the Nation*, pp. 47-52, Jefferson Davis, *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, pp. 537-561, Williams; *Contours*, pp. 300-324 and *Roots of the Modern American Empire*, pp. 107-127, Ekirch, *Decline of American Liberalism*, pp. 116-170. For the broader cross-currents of Reconstruction, see C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (New York, 1960), pp. 89-107 and *Origins of the New South*, pp. 1-74, and (again) W.J. Cash, *Mind of the South*, pp. 105-147.

For an introduction to internal colonialism, see B.B. Kendrick, "The Colonial Status of the South" in *The Pursuit of Southern History*, ed. George B. Tindall (Baton Rouge, La., 1964), pp. 90-105 and A.B. Moore, "One Hundred Years of Reconstruction of the South" in *ibid.*, pp. 106-128, Woodward, "The Colonial Economy" in *Origins of the New South*,

Ch. XI, pp. 291-320, and *passim*, and more recently the "colonialism" issue of *Southern Exposure* (Summer/Fall, 1973).

I hope to treat these issues at greater length in a longer version of this paper.