A Conversation with MacDonald King Aston & Bazz Childress

December, 2003

(The following article comprises an email conversation between Mr Bazz Childress and MacDonald King Aston, December of 2003. The conversation has, as its context, the article, Defining the Future, by MKA.)

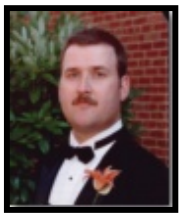
Dear Mr. Childress,

I have read your essay below with great interest. Obviously, you cover quite a bit of ground; therefore, please allow me to respond interlinearly. By the way, I have received several thoughtful responses to the Defining the Future piece, and I'm placing them up on the Colorado League of the South website as an ongoing debate and refinement of the position. I would be honoured if you would permit me to place your essay there. In the meantime, please excuse any typos; I was more interested in responding than in grammar (though I love grammar!).

MacDonald King Aston

Dear Mr. Aston,

Re: Defining the Future [I have a much longer version (unfinished) of this if you're interested] Would love to hear your thoughts on the below:



MKA Yes, I'd like to read the longer version, if you wouldn't mind.

BDC I read your post [Defining the Future] with much interest. I also have been concerned by some of the recent airing of division within our ranks. As usual, I find myself disagreeing to some degree with nearly everyone. Even so I must commend you on your very insightful comments. Along with you, I also am perversely optimistic. I am so for the following reason. Until and unless "The Southern Movement" actually becomes a viable vehicle for meaningful dissent from the prevailing wisdom (or the vehicle of actual political separation from the source of that prevailing wisdom), the "threat" such represents to that source (the philosophical foundation of our current government), can be managed by the typical epithets. Those epithets are: Reactionaries, radicals, extremists, racists, gap-toothed throwbacks, traitors, et al.

MKA Which brings up a point I've thought about a little, namely, the heavy reliance upon taxonomy to control people. How many articles have I read in which the author dismisses Southern symbolism or polity with a flip, "Oh, but they're just a bunch of racists"? It is this reliance upon classifying folks, usually negatively, that promotes a cheap form of political intimidation. ("Why, no, I'm not a racist...") Further, it is this classifying tendency that leads me to believe that folks, and especially young folks, need to be educated about the power and meaning of classification (which in ancient Greece was simply a part of the "Ars Rhetorica", the first system of collegiate learning). Once one knows how one is being classified, then one knows how one is being controlled.

BDC And one must know words and their proper meaning to be able to communicate at all; hence my perhaps weak attempt to bring up the sense(s) in which the term racism is used. Most folks don't like being called nasty names. I believe such folks also know, on some intuitive level, that if Southern political influence makes any more gains, particularly if those gains are toward actually re-creating what you describe as the "Constitutional Republic that our forefathers created upon this continent", those attacks will not only include name calling, but actual intimidation.

MKA I missed your reason for being optimistic. Perhaps you could clarify? My own reason is fairly simple. God will have the truth, at

least eventually. As my friend, Robert Lloyd, says, we are fighting for our children's future.

BDC Amen—that is my precise reason! The Mike Tuggle article, about which several folks have already commented, about the attempts to associate a recent incidence of violence in South Carolina (interestingly by transplanted New Englanders, surprise, surprise), with the Southern Nationalist movement, is indeed important for the precise reason that it may presage the development of that real intimidation. I would argue, in fact, that in some respects such has already begun and would cite the many instances of firings and mistreatment of individuals who display Southern symbols by their employers of which many of us are aware through the SHNV newsletter, Aw Shucks, Dixienet and Dixie Daily News web sites.

MKA The intimidation of which you speak has indeed begun. But I fear that many in the Southern movement will be taken by surprise by a modern equivalent of Ft. Sumter. That is, the empire will, when sufficiently threatened, create a violent and splashy event that will, in one fell swoop, silence the Southern movement (for a while). For this reason, I believe it important that we keep our guard up against just such an event. We should expect it, not be surprised by it. It will come. And because it will come, we should take steps ahead of time to educate people that a prepared attack upon our culture is in the works and we know it. A subject, perhaps, for another essay however.

BDC Indeed, I have been speaking of this precise point to some of my coworkers. As one of Kennedy's advisors said when the Viet Cong blew up the Pleiku airfield, 'This is where we can hop on the train' — but really, the way things are going—any excuse might do.....So those folks who don't like to be called names, one might presume, certainly wouldn't want to suffer such real harassment. And make no mistake, as the Southern Nationalist Movement gains strength, that real intimidating harassment will come, if it has not already begun and if it has already begun as I argue above, it will intensify. Indeed, all the name calling and lies about the South have intensified precisely because the South has already re-gained a huge amount of political influence (evidenced by the sudden great interest in seeking "The Southern Vote"), hence those attacks. (Recall that the program of hypocritically attacking the South, [Jefferson called it the 'Whig party trick'], began exactly because the South at the time, roughly 1820, was the major influence on the US government—an influence which prevented New England from obtaining its special interest government). If my argument is accurate, my perverse optimism is put into context. We are becoming that "threat". (As an example, the Lew Rockwell website is far and away the most read "conservative" website on the Internet and their very Southern friendly positions on issues have been attacked from all directions of the "US Empire"). As Southern Nationalist sentiment's political influence gains in strength, so will the opposition. The attacks coming from that opposition then become the gauge by which our "activist" efforts can be measured and also represents the dynamic driving the "activists" and "non activists" apart.

MKA I think I see your optimism better now. I would only add the warning about the "prepared attack" to come. The empire is historically quite good at such attacks, which serve to solidify its power and position. I think it would be a good thing if a number of thoughtful Southerners could start writing in advance about such an attack. That way there would be a record of truth when the "attack" arrives.

BDC Good idea—plenty of examples available—the lead up to every war the US has fought, for instance. It is the dynamic described above that is accomplishing the "polarization and shake out" of which you speak. Such a developing storm must be unsettling to folks who, as you describe, simply "want the empire to treat the South better." I have become convinced that such is a vain hope. The US government as it is currently founded is not going to reform itself. The miserable failure of the "Republican Revolution of 1994" should be sufficient proof in and of itself, but particularly when coupled to the behavior of the first Republican president (Bush II or as I call him, Lincoln, Jr.) after 1994 and his taking the US big business commercial interests and Jacobin political program global against the worst possible enemy to attempt to do so. Indeed, I believe that future general elections are going to make the 2000 election look like a love fest in comparison.

BDC: "...all bribes are an inverted threat."

MKA I agree, and it should be interesting to see how it all happens. As the 2000 election showed, the empire is already deeply divided. I see no evidence to support the thesis that the division will not increase. Instead, the political sphere should, if I am correct, become more and more nasty. And, since there is no separating the political from the social sphere, one could expect a dramatic "taking of sides" at some point. Even folks in the New England states are starting to wake up a bit. How many people in Massachusetts really support, for example, "gay marriage"? Well, it has arrived in that state. If you recall, I pointed out that this polarisation will be a positive good, in that it will clearly delineate one's stand. Here in Colorado, for example, there is an open civil war in the Colorado SCV, with those who (vaguely) support the empire arrayed against those who support the South and the American constitutional republic.

BDC I would also offer the reaction to Howard Dean's comments about wanting the votes of those who have Confederate Flags "in" their trucks as an example of how contentious and dishonest future elections will get.

MKA And now Dean declares that he will talk about religion in the South. How transparent.

BDC In fact, we should all be grateful for the opportunity Dean's comments have provided to clearly see how non-Southerners and some Southerners still view the South. If any of "the non-activists" doubted it before, the general reaction to Dean's comments should convince any such that the rest of the country believes that race is still the preeminent concern of Southerners and we are itching to return to the days of segregation and Jim Crow laws. They evidently believe that the continued display of Southern symbols and pride in the South's history and "otherness", risks causing such retrograde and backward thinking to rise again. They profess not to understand how anyone would want to display "such a divisive symbol" which represents "opposition to Civil Rights", particularly because the devotion to that racist stance is preventing the poor white (and still backward) portion of the South, from enjoying the material fruits of the American System. The message is: lay all that down and we'll see to it that you are showered with the appropriate material rewards. (In other words, a bribe is being offered. And as an aside, all bribes are an inverted threat).

MKA Interestingly, one rarely hears criticism of the whole "Civil Rights" mantra emanating from the empire. All necessary "civil rights" were already granted under the Constitution. The illegal 14th Amendment simply conferred those existing rights upon blacks (while creating the "American citizen" at the same time). It is, I would argue, high time that the Southern movement take head on the race issue. Not merely to dispute it, but to define it. Who defines,controls. Somehow, the notion of "race" has become conflated with "culture", and few there are who point that out. In the Southern movement, most responses are defensive. I argue that we should go on the offensive and separate "race" from "culture" once and for all.

MKA: "Who defines,controls"

BDC None of the above should surprise. What is disappointing, is the reaction of far too many connected with the "establishment" (with the exception of a few—Wes Pruden's, Senior Editor of the Washington Times, 7 Nov 2003 editorial)— Southerners who would like the elites to have a positive view of them have revealed in their reactions the extent of the success of the nearly two-century-old propaganda campaign waged against the South. Those reactions remind me of nothing if not a phenomenon that has been named "the Stockholm Syndrome". That syndrome purports the tendency of long-held hostages or kidnap victims over time to become sympathetic toward the opinions of their captors.

MKA This is one your more cogent points. The extent of the propaganda is truly amazing. And, like race, it must be taken on directly. We are in need of someone to map that propaganda; to show its face in its entirety. We may be seeing some of that

propaganda crumbling of late, with the Church of Lincoln on the run at last.

BDC I would offer the comments of three Southern politicos as example, namely retired General Wes Clark from Arkansas, Senator John Edwards of North Carolina, and retiring Senator Zell Miller from Georgia. All three have revealed their reflexive Southern roots by basically saying, 'We don't need a northerner to tell us how to think'. Each then though have immediately launched into what would be a hilarious, were it not so tragic, further reaction that demonstrates they indeed have adopted views that conform to what our captors think. I summarize that further reaction (and they seem to represent the majority reaction of those beholden to the existing power elite to date) thus:

> "Mr. Dean—your Confederate flag comment stereotypes us Southerners. We sophisticated Southerners don't fly the flag any longer. We're not poor or backward. We want all the fruits of the American System just as you do and are willing to admit that the South was wrong to start a war to keep slavery and maintain white supremacy. We have repented of those sins. Why, we now even elect black people to public office! Today, you have nothing to fear from the South's rapidly increasing political clout. All you have done by pandering to that small, irrelevant group of gap-toothed, redneck, truck-driving, flag-waving, racist element among us, with whom we have to suffer, is to give them a legitimacy they don't deserve and prolong the day when we will have been able to cast them into the dustbin of history'"

In other words, the current leadership of the South, at least insofar as they would agree with the three mentioned above, has essentially surrendered by accepting the New England version of the history of this country. Indeed, in today's America the demand is: accept our view and be rewarded—resist and be castigated. Like victims, our current leaders have chosen reward over castigation. Their followers are not far behind in choosing likewise (the non-activists?). It is difficult to judge whether this choice is based on honest opinion (after all it is possible to really believe, out of historical and philosophical ignorance, the 100+ year-old propaganda we've been fed), fear of rocking the boat, hopelessness, or the inability to see how the deliberate, unprincipled decision to play the race game, used so long to establish and maintain the authority and legitimacy of the US government as it currently exists, plays itself out. My suspicion is that it is the latter. I have that suspicion because of the political utility, given by that false view of US history, that attacks on the South for being "anti American" have long provided, and the castigating intimidation it provides to make their opponents cower in the face of presumed superior morality and justice.

MKA Part of the mapping of the propaganda effort would show that Southerners (and Southern Nationalists) have been more "pro-American" than any other group in the empire. Even to this day, I am often forced to remind people that secession and its consequences are, as others have already stated, American to the core.

BDC Professional militaries have difficult "rites of passage" events precisely due to the dynamic I'm trying to identify. In combat, most human beings want to find a safe spot away from the storm of supersonic metal flying overhead. Real leaders know that seeking such is a false haven and that ultimate destruction will inevitably come if that storm is not faced and overcome—and they know that there will be casualties from that facing undertaken to avoid utter annihilation. The analog to those soldiers who want to find that safe haven in the context of the Southern Movement are those who seem to believe that we could obtain such 'better treatment of the South' if we could just find the forum of sufficient scope where the truth can be explained in such a rationally compelling manner that intellectual assent to the correctness of our analysis of the matter would occur.

That result is simply not going to come. It is not going to come because our opponents are not intellectually honest and our Southern political leaders (as discussed above) are going to have to be led and not followed, because they've caved in to the prevailing false wisdom.

MKA I heartily agree with that last statement. The Southern movement is, it seems, in need of a Great Voice to refute the pseudo-morality of the empire. That Voice has not yet appeared to my knowledge.

BDC As has been the case about governments throughout human history, those who dominate the US government today are interested in holding power—the big business commercial side of the equation due to greed—the social utopians due to their true belief and utter devotion to their secular religion. Neither will voluntarily accede to the constraining of the power put into the hands of the federal government through their 140-year-old cooperation, hence my prediction that future elections are going to be ever more contentious, because however imperfectly and slowly (the Lew Rockwell website already cited being an example and the recent California recall election spectacle possibly another), folks are becoming aware of the fact that something (they're not quite sure what) is wrong. (The blockbuster success of the Lord of the Rings movies may have something to do with the sense that something is wrong. See *Tolkien and Power* and *Tolkien's Libertarian Vision*).

MKA I had been thinking about the ramifications of the success of the Tolkien movies. Remember that Tolkien, like C.S. Lewis, was a professor of Classics (philology) as well as a Christian. In Tolkien's words:

> "The Lord of the Rings is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first but consciously in the revision. I have cut out practically all references to anything like 'religion,' to cults and practices in the imaginary world. For the religious element is absorbed into the story and the symbolism. However that is very clumsily put, and sounds more self-important than I feel. I should chiefly be grateful for having been brought up since I was eight in a faith that has nourished me and taught me all the little that I know..."

There is little doubt that the Tolkien Trilogy is a work whose central thesis concerns the battle between Good and Evil, which, as you know, goes directly against the secularist "mainstream" of the empire which insists that both Good and Evil are relativistic notions, with Evil trotted out as an "absence of good".

BDC I have a little different take on the matter that we can discuss subsequently perhaps. Have you seen The Last Samurai—remarkably similar as to theme, which is my different take—to wit: Power, its legitimacy and its exercise (which in practical terms is where good and evil clash). But to continue, they feel something is wrong, because the social utopians, whose philosophy has become the national religion and has been swallowed almost entirely by our entire political leadership, I believe, have overreached. Recall that nearly 2000 years ago, Roman imperial persecution of Christianity actually strengthened the young religion's growth and that new religion became an important component, eventually, of the downfall of at least the western half of that empire. Likewise, the overreach of which I speak (the renewed attacks on the South being part of same), is strengthening that sense that something is wrong. It seems to me that it is our job to explain what is wrong. To be able to do that accurately, we ourselves have got to better understand and be able to communicate that understanding much better than we are able to do at the moment.

MKA THe Roman persecution of Christianity, however, took a different form than many of the other Roman persecutions. Keep in mind that Christianity had a strong impetus from upper-class Romans, particularly women. Christianity offered people a worldview (among other things) against which the sterility of the imperial dogma could easily be contrasted. I point out this fact because many believe, falsely, in my opinion, that Christianity owed its success almost entirely to persecution. I would argue that Christianity in the Roman Empire owed its success to its central message, and that the persecution simply strengthened that message.

BDC Yes, yes, yes exactly, which is why I said strengthened rather than founded, or engendered. My wife and I just took a University of Kentucky Honors Program class through her employer, Lexington Theological Seminary, that was very interesting regarding the above. Likewise the overreach of which I speak I believe will strengthen what remains of those of us who oppose the

Jacobins.

MKA The implications for us are clear: We must have a central message, and that message must be clear and unmistakable in its entirety. What we have in the meantime (during the "shake-out") is a congeries of conflicting messages about the South and its meaning for the future. Reading the posts of late on the Demastus list, it is clear to me, for example, that many in the Southern movement are near to sacrificing the dominant role of the Judaeo-Christian background of European and hence American culture. While it is true that the South housed a true "diversity" of religions and opinions, that "diversity" was overshadowed at all times by that Judaeo-Christian background. My own kin in the Choctaw Nation adopted Christianity very quickly, and today there is, in some quarters, animosity against Choctaw who reject the "old ways" (whatever they were).

BDC To arrive at that better understanding we ourselves must get educated about matters of religion and the modern controversies about same due to the following: Religious perceptions (that reflect the set of beliefs that define what a people believe to be ultimately important and therefore foundational in answering the age-old and unavoidable questions: What is reality? What are human beings? And what is the job of humans in that reality?) Religious perceptions [the Gnosticism of a particular people] then found culture (that "system of sentiments" from which grow the particular ways in which a particular people behave toward and with one another and other peoples).

MKA I find your reference to Gnosticism fascinating, though I dont quite understand how you are using it here. As you know, Gnosticism, as an historical movement, was a Hydra-headed beast, taking many forms, many flavours. At the heart of all Gnostic systems, however, was the notion that there were some (few) who simply knew God and did not need belief in Him. A startling point of view which, of course, led to immediate persecution for the Gnostics.

BDC Perhaps I'm inventing my own usage :-), but the fact that Gnostics were multifaceted is why I chose the term. More below regarding the Greeks' having several words for knowledge (Gnosis being one). Those sentiments and behaviors found legal systems (where such get codified). This progression is simply unavoidable. Those who argue that we've got to "get religion out of politics" are arguing for the impossible. It's akin to arguing that we humans have got to find a way to breath without an atmosphere. (I hope that the preceding comments make clearer the importance of Frank Connor's SHNV post some time ago concerning the book he cited arguing that changing understanding requires changing culture—changing culture requires changing religion; although Frank makes the error of associating culture with race—more below.)

MKA See? There is the conflation of which I spoke: mistaking race with culture.

BDC We've also got to find a way to separate the idea that culture (the acquisition of those religious perceptions and system of sentiments) is somehow associated with skin color or ethnicity. While it is true that Western Civilization produced the development of that Southern creation of ordered liberty (that Constitutional Republic of which you speak) and that the skin color of those producing same was white, I believe it to be an error in logic to connect the founding source(s) of that civilization to white skin color. The best example of a similar error in logic is when children come to believe when they see the leaves blowing on trees and feel the wind on their faces that the movement of the leaves is creating the wind, rather than the other way around. The fact that Western Civilization was largely the creation of people with white skin color is a matter of the progression of human history up against planetary geography. I obviously can't make the whole of my case here for my slant on that story, but let me offer the following cryptic (to arouse curiosity) comments: Had the horse not been available to the pastoral peoples of the Asian Steppes and less available to the Romans (hence their creation of their military road system, because they were infantry-heavy), coupled with the Chinese stifling the development of their commercial classes around AD 1100, the world would be dominated by yellow-skinned and dark-skinned peoples, and the modern world dominated by secularism would simply not exist. (And as an aside, if we who believe that modern secular, scientific materialist thinking is soul killing are correct, shouldn't we be upset, if we connect the

development of same to skin color, with the white-skinned folks whose increasing dominance of the world scene after AD 1100 led to that soul killing result?)

MKA In short, you are arguing what I argue (if I got my argufying aright), that race and culture have become mistakenly conflated. It is, as I have said, high time that we took the offensive on the issue.

BDC I am attempting to argue, in my arcane way, that skin color and ethnicity have nothing necessarily to do with the development of the cultural components that would be the foundation for the kind of society in which one might want to live. The degree to which we have allowed that error in logic to mislead is precisely the soil in which the seeds of the destruction of such a society grew up into the green plant of the issues of slavery and race as political weapons used as tools for its destruction. I am of course referring to Jacobinism, the product of Jean Jacques Rousseau's modern Romanticism—Overview of Rousseau. That destruction has gotten so nearly complete that it has become our atmosphere and I believe is the reason that the non-activists cannot see clearly how their answers to some of these issues are shaped by that secular religion and not by those of the religion (Christianity) without whose existence and influence, the world in which we live today (at least the aspects that are healthy) would simply not be possible (and which is why the founders of our country believed they had to and were setting the foundation of the US government (the codification of religion and culture of which I spoke above) on it. Everyone is arguing about precisely that point—but without deep thought about its real significance and complexion. I have attached a file that might add a little more to this thought.

MKA Thus the Ten Commandments brouhaha in Alabama. The truth becomes the Lie and the Lie is fed in buckets. The Constitution states quite clearly the limits of federal intervention in the States' rights to define their religious environment. But the media treat the issue as if there were two sides. There are not. Either the law of the land is based on some morality or there is no law of the land, and the law of the land in Alabama (and every other state) is based on the Judaeo-Christian ethos upon which America was founded.

BDC And that is the fundamental intellectual dishonesty. The social utopians want us to believe that they have a replacement for that progression of religion to culture to law. In fact, because they view that equation has having yielded by its very nature the sorry record of human mistreatment of one another, they define it as inherently racist, and in fact it is, if one defines such as believing absolutely one's own answers to the questions (What is reality? What are humans? And what is the job of humans in that reality? Taken together the answers to these questions can be identified as the source of any particular culture's 'Gnosticism', that word being the Greek word for knowledge—and derived therefrom the wisdom—the Greek word for which is Sofia, the root of our word philosophy—by which it organizes its society].

MKA Just to be arcane myself, the Greeks had several words for knowledge. "Gnoein" was the verb that meant immediate insight (as opposed to knowledge based upon an object of knowledge). "Pisteuein" represents a verb that also meant "to know", but to know because of an object against which knowledge could be thrown into relief.

BDC I chose Gnosis precisely because it became the catch all term for the many varieties of groups working out the mixture of Athens and Jerusalem, but also because the mystical mindset of all religion prior to the Hebrew and Greek mixture (that produced Western Civilization), produced cultures that, although sharing a nearly identical conception of reality—still in complexion were different and still fought with one another. Exactly because (at least as I'm trying to use it) of the "eclecticism" of what the term Gnosis (Gnostic) has been used to describe, it seems a good term to use to found my point that differing "belief systems", even when they share a great deal, wind up conflicting with one another (that competition between Gnosticisms to which I refer in a below paragraph). Interestingly, De Tocqueville talks about some of this—see *http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/ch1_07.htm*.

Indeed, that is the crux of the matter. Karl Marx, one of those utopians, was wrong. He wanted to make class conflict the driver of human history. Rather than the conflict between classes, it is the Gnosticism of different human communities and the conflicts arising from them (between and among those human communities from which the development of civilization itself and the class structures (divisions of labor) that are the inescapable byproducts of civilization itself) which drive history. The challenge has been how to manage those inherent conflicts. The utopians seek the end of those inevitable conflicts, not their management. (I would suggest that is the context by which to understand a bestseller some years back by Francis Fukuyama called *The End of History and the Last Man*). American history (which is largely Southern history before Lincoln injected French radical utopianism into our blood veins) is precisely a target because it was potentially the most successful model for controlling those conflicts humanity has ever invented and as such stood in the way of the utopian project of ending them.

MKA Amen.

BDC But their project is impossible because the success of ending such conflict, rather than managing it, requires the destruction of any answering of those fundamental questions in any absolute formulations (meaning in religious [Gnostic] ways) because such is the source of the conflicts they wish to destroy. That is why they demand a new definition of tolerance and have invented the false separation of church and state doctrine. (They then can argue that no culture is better than any other [the egalitarian ethic], because there are no ultimate truths that make any culture "more right" than any other, because there is no God [hasn't science proved that] and if that is true, there is nothing to fight about. If we quit fighting over these superstitions, then we can grow enough food, stop wars, etc., and best of all we can all quit being racists and get along. All we have to do is to adopt the just described utopian faith which then provides the answers to those religious questions and then itself becomes the new version of the religion-culture-law progression). Their answers then become the foundation of the only culture allowed (theirs), all the while proclaiming they've created the environment where multiple diverse cultures can exist. To hold such contradictory impossible results up as the solution to the human propensity for conflict is the height of corrupting intellectual dishonesty. Indeed, the South is vilified precisely because it refuses to accede to the utopian's demand for abject surrender to this falsehood, and this is why Richard Weaver called the South "the last nonmaterial society in the world". (For those interested in Southern Culture, I recommend Richard Weaver's: *The Southern Tradition at Bay*. For those who visit the book link preceding, pay close attention to the mention of Weaver's influence on Goldwater and Reagan and their impact on the modern Republican Party.) Also, *Review of Weaver.*

MKA In other words, the dominant culture has erected a relativistic reading of history and human culture in which religion is treated as just another artifact. Relativism, in this context, is just a synonym for an a-gnostic view, and, further, reflects the inch-deep philosophical training of "modern" thought. Traditional metaphysics would toss this form of relativism, if not all forms, out the window, for it defeats its own meaning. If all is relative, nothing is, since anything relative requires a "tertium quid", a standard that is not relative, against which relation itself is then measured.

BDC Yes, and again intellectual dishonesty corrupts, making any discussion impossible. Hmmm, but lying always does that, no? Wonder if that's why modern philosophy is so focused on nihilism and the idea that there isn't really any reality at all other than the inventions of our perfervid imaginations? See *http://www.lewrockwell.com/tucker/tucker42.html.* As the mortal enemy of the utopian's social agenda, the South came under and is still under attack and through the point of its prime vulnerability—the errors in logic concerning race and culture and the existence of slavery in a society claiming to stand for liberty. Those difficult and emotional issues have gotten tremendously confused. That confusion, I would argue, has been deliberately engendered in order to bring off that attack on that utopian agenda's last remaining opponent, in order to effect the adoption of this corrupting cultureless chaos of impossible-to-accomplish Jacobin egalitarian rubbish. We are confused by it, because we don't understand (and our education established isn't going to help us in that regard) the human story in terms of that competition between Gnosticisms

MKA By Gnosticism here are you referring to individual convictions or cultural?

BDC Cultural per the above points regarding the Greek words for knowledge. Classical Liberalism opposed the Jacobin program and what today is called conservatism (small c), *WHAT IS PALEOCONSERVATISM?* was founded by Edmund Burke's criticism of Rousseau's radical program. Classical Liberalism, whose idea of liberty was the constraining of the arbitrary use of government power (the ability to coerce in the name of whatever noble or ignoble cause whether carried out by king and religious authority or Hobbe's Sovereign), grew up in England and the South. Virginia, the mother of the South, invented this country on its basis. Its hallmarks were free trade, property rights, and religion's necessary influence bubbling up from the people rather than being coerced from the rulers. (For those Classical Liberals weren't naïve enough to believe that humans could do without religion, hence the founders nearly unanimous admonitions that they were founding their Republic on Christian precepts and that for it to work would require a virtuous people). That lack of naiveté is not to argue what some today mistakenly do. The founders wished these inherent and inescapable cultural conflicts be worked out at the most local political levels possible and not imposed from the top down.

MKA True. And it is the reason why I support nearly all secession movements, including Hawaii, Alaska, and the Indian Nations.

BDC ...(as some in the Southern Movement do today in the name of defending the very culture that allowed that potentially best system of dealing with such conflict in decentralized (where people live) rather than centralized (where people are coerced) ways). For those Southern Baptists among the readership, I would ask you to consider what's been going on in the SBC precisely by this dynamic, for what's been occurring in the SBC in one particular religious microcosm is what is occurring in the broader cultural macrocosm. The cultural attitudes that allowed that decentralized dealing were those that grew from the Middle Age European Christian Romanticism, informed by Protestantism (in the South, the Scots-Irish Celtic bunch through the Presbyterian church as it came to be affected by Pietistic traditions), without which informing Grace the founders knew the republic would be lost—and they were indeed correct. Only that Christian Romantic tradition allowed for a true tolerance. Meaning something along these lines: I believe my way of living (my culture) is true, but that culture also informs me to 'live and let live' as far as possible. The modern egalitarian culture is, as I've already described, hardly live and let live, even while claiming to produce cultural diversity from its totalitarian demand for agreement with its cultural assumptions. And the ends are different as well.

Egalitarianism claims its desired outcome is cultural preservation and diversity (an impossible result given its assumptions). Christian Romanticism claims its desired outcome is for all to come to the knowledge of its truth, but in its best living out, refuses to coerce such (unlike egalitarianism), producing with irony and paradox truly tolerant and diverse communities. It is for this precise reason that Alexis DeTocqueville, the French aristocrat who traveled in American in the 1830s and commented upon what he found, remarked that in the South a truly tolerant society had sprung up, quite to the contrary than in the already increasingly philosophically egalitarian dominated society of the north.

MKA Can you give me the source of De Tocqueville's remarks? In my readings of his, De Tocqueville damns both the North and the South, while admitting that "...the equality of fortunes and the absence of slavery in the North plunge the inhabitants in those material cares which are disdained by the white populations of the South. They [Northerners] are taught from infancy to combat want and to place wealth above all the pleasures of the intellect or the heart." (*The Three Races in the United States*)

BDC I will try and find the specific section, but the general tone of De Tocqueville's work is per the above—even though, as you say, he is hard on both sections. De Tocqueville's remarks are even more interesting though in that he seemed more infatuated with New England (being that rare bird—a liberal aristocrat). When you have an opportunity, read Sheldon Vanauken's *A Glittering Illusion* for more on this point. Culture and true tolerance simply cannot be imposed. To the degree that confusion reigns on these points among some in the Southern Movement about the philosophical roots of these controversies, we are going to continue to suffer from our own ignorance.

MKA Good point here. Until we are no longer dwelling in ignorance, we shall perpetually reinvent our distress.

BDC And we will continue to have some on the other side of the divide of this ignorance argue that the South was culturally diverse and sought same as an end in and of itself, because it didn't believe its Christian perceptions were true and superior. They did believe exactly that—(mistakenly linking its existence to "whiteness", through that error in logic already discussed and through which their culture would be destroyed), creating as a byproduct of that superior culture the very "multicultural diversity" that they would rather (if they could have produced it by persuasion rather than coercion) not have had, because it was not their purpose to produce it. What irony! But humanity has always had difficulty in digesting paradox—even though it is often spiritually nourishing to at least attempt to digest.

How have we arrived at today? The answer is: through an attack on what could have been the center of the Liberal Project (the fledgling united States) and after the northern victory the South, hence the continuing attacks upon us, where the embers of Classical Liberalism are yet glowing. (G.K.Chesterton's famous quote: The center will not hold?") Lincoln and the Jacobins' program combined to attack the South at the precise point of its vulnerability—slavery and religion.

MKA When I travel in the South, I am constantly reminded of the vast cultural divide that separates the South from the north. And that divide springs almost entirely from the South's Christianity (or the lack of the Judaeo-Christian ethic in the north). The sheer religiosity of the South must surely cause the empire more than a little unease, for a people who base their culture upon a bedrock of absolutism in ethics and religion will never bow down to an agnostic culture of relativism.

BDC Because the South, despite taking on some of the practical results of the Liberal Project, does not believe in its central proposition, the faith in human reason and the ability to save men by proper political arrangements seemingly evident therefrom. (Such forms the core of the modern idea of progress). To the degree the South holds the more ancient, albeit Christian version, view that, as Immanual Kant, one of those Enlightenment philosophers, along with Rousseau (albeit in the Rationalist camp) said, "Out of the crooked timber of humanity, nothing straight was ever made", it can be said to be Romantic; but its Romanticism is the Christian Romanticism, not the new radical egalitarian, Jacobin Romanticism masquerading as reason. Or as G.K. Chesterton also said, "[Modern] Tolerance is the virtue of men who no longer believe in anything."

MKA That remark by Chesterton rings even more true today in the united States. A people without a Creator can not, by definition, believe in anything absolutely. Conversely, the same people can believe in anything that suits them. You point this out below in your remark on the New Order, which is on what does one, then, base authority?

BDC And consider the brilliance of that Jacobin attack. If indeed, in order to free humanity from those old chains, the old order had to be flattened through, if necessary, bloody revolution, a new "culture" based on that new ethic had to be created by building new people and destroying those who think otherwise. The Jacobins viewed that Old Order and its culture has having been built on religion, and they were right, but naïve, in thinking that its destruction would solve what they thought it would, (because it does not provide an answer to the single greatest problem of the New Order—on what to base authority.) The German Romantics (more below) would offer an answer with devastating results.

In the US, killing religion has involved two attacks (one involving slavery and is itself brilliant. Why? Precisely because ancient religion and later (non-Puritan inspired) Christianity were silent on the matter if not tolerant, arguing not for abolition but for the moral improvement in its practice. So the Old Order could be attacked. Classical Liberalism, emphasizing liberty and property rights (the middle ground between ancient mystical authoritarianism and the totalitarianism of the Jacobins), could be attacked as well in that it is vulnerable on the property-rights issue (slaves were property—but property is the keystone of liberty (internal contradiction) that could have been solved with time, but not when a revolutionary mindset and greed's cooperation used that

contradiction to smash liberty to make room for the sufficiently powerful agent (Hobbe's Sovereign) to enforce egalitarianism. Marx turned this into class warfare. To use class warfare in the US, one uses the race issue.

MKA Yes. Race and class in the united States are always, so it seems, linked. Thus, one can have a "Black Caucus" but not a "White Caucus". Why? Because, I would argue, to be "White" (whatever that truly means) implies a class superiority (even if there is no superior).

BDC Another issue of which De Tocqueville wrote presciently, although at least so far his prediction of a race war has not occurred. That is why Marx was so gleeful to see Lincoln's war. Lincoln didn't have a clue about any of these hoary philosophical debates, by men who, unlike his opponents, could read Polybius, Pericles, et al., in the original Greek and Latin. Instead he gained his knowledge from reading newspapers (today they're written for ninth-grade reading levels, so not much has changed) and political tracts. If in fact the alliance of King and Priests was the agent of the gods in maintaining that Old Order, to smash that Old Order requires smashing religion or any such similar arrangement (Middle Age Christianity). But culture is built on religious sentiments (whether of transcendent or material complexion).

MKA At least from the standpoint of anthropology, all cultures have religion of some sort; they go together.

BDC If one can argue that no culture should be viewed as superior to any other (the egalitarian ethic called multi-culturalism), then the resulting cultureless blank sheets are available upon which the new education to create the new human can be created. The Frankfurt School, inspired by an Italian Communist by the name of Antonio Gramsci, is the modern expression of this equation, and Reconstruction II (the 1960s Civil Rights Movement), for which the egalitarians pushed precisely because its accomplishment requires a federal government whose power approaches that of Hobbe's Sovereign), is one of its children. Indeed, Reconstruction II is evidence of that overreach comment with which I began, because the ironic result of its pursuit is renewed interest in how we've gotten where we are and the resurgent Southern influence that has perversely resulted (provoked by racism of course. It couldn't possibly be honest and fearful disagreement with the corrupting Jacobins).

The second prong of the attack is the redefinition of the concept of the separation of church and state. (The bubbling up of religious influence from below rather than coerced from above). That redefinition has proved irresistible—its outline is thus: Isn't it fair not to force your religion down someone else's throat in exchange for they're not doing that to you (as if the state has an interest in mediating that conflict for the benefit of the participants). That is always how tyrants behave—they create a conflict and then step in to solve their artificial creation. (It is by that precise dynamic that Rome moved into ancient Palestine around 70 BC, by posing as a mediator. And one wonders why those in the Mideast today view our role as "mediators" with suspicion. They have a long memory of the many times that dynamic has played out). There was never such a threat from the beginning of this country to when the conflict was created. Now the government has the various religious groups fighting one another all the while arranging for rulings in the name of mediating, per the preceding, which has the effect of barring at least the public aspects of religious practice and acknowledgment, which then is to bar the maintenance of a culture (which is foundation of any human civilization) that could stand in opposition to the Jacobin program. And again, with no culture you have a blank slate to build a new modern culture. The attempts to carry that forward in the 20th Century have been disastrous.

But rather than the sort of governments Jacobian revolution inspires, leading to those disasters of the 20th century's bloody human sacrifice on utopian altars, the slaveholding Virginians who invented this country believed that with time—one of those evils (slavery) would die a natural death. And indeed, until the industrial revolution came along (the initial phase of which was led by the development of England's and then New England's cotton cloth factories, with their voracious demand for slave-produced cotton to be finished into cloth by the world's first wage slaves), slavery was a dying institution—just as it had largely disappeared (at least in

relative terms) in Europe after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. Slavery passed out of existence (despite the old opinion that civilization itself depended on its practice in some form) in every entity that we now call "Western secular democracies"— indeed, even in autocratic Russia under the Czars—without a war.

It involved war for the United States only because of the convergence of the interests of three groups that have proved lethal to the original American experiment in ordered liberty. Those interests were the New England mercantilists, the New England Protestant Messianic Millennialists, and the Jacobins (we now call them communists or socialists). Their project became true hypocrisy, for by latching on to slavery and race to obtain their respective ends, what they claimed they sought was not what was actually sought or delivered.

MKA And I would argue that the mercantilism of New England has now become the dominant form of culture in the united States. All principles and beliefs derive their validity (at least to the empire) from mercantilist values. Oddly enough, I first realised this point from reading "Shibumi", a fictional work by Trevanian, I believe.

BDC In The Last Samurai—the Japanese envoy excuses Algren's rude behavior as being due to his being from the US (the society of base traders). Our inadequate understanding of these matters is further shown by the belief some hold that the Antebellum South had “white supremacy” as a major premise of its actions. Leaving aside for the moment that “white supremacy” in its modern manifestation is a concept resting on a foundation that postdates the war Lincoln's influence inspired, why do we not include the northern portion of the united States in the criticism? The entire (what we now call, developed) world, not just Southerners, including the northern states of the US in the 19th century and beyond, viewed black folk as inferior. Their status as slaves, by then in the New World of nearly 300 years duration, (and much longer than that in Africa and immediate environs, counting those Africans whose tribal enemies had been capturing them and selling them into slavery for hundreds of years before their arrival in the Americas), seeming to confirm such an opinion. Over time, having black skin, at least in North America, came to be viewed as the mark of an inferior brand of human, fit only for a subservient role. (A view perhaps understandable, given the 300-year-old "evidence" for such, but in reality is the error in logic which I've already described that links skin color to the development of culture.) Western Civilization provided the tools for the technologically and politically superior (white) societies and that superiority was the benchmark that deemed less capable (in those terms) peoples inferior. The association with skin color in the production of Western Civilization was an historical "accident" having to do with the flow of history and geography. We have and are paying a dear price for that error in logic.

MKA To be born in the united States in the 19th century was to be born a "white supremacist", whether north or South; one reason, as you have said, why the deprecation of the South for its race relations in our times lacks substance. The issue for us, today, is not the racism of the 1800s, but, as I have phrased it, "defining the future" so that liberty is preeminent for all (since liberty to a few comes at great peril to those few, and also for the simple ethical dimensions of the issue). What is needed, so I believe, is a new start. A new country (perhaps not so new), divorced from the mercantilist, God-empty, Puritanism of the northern elite in DC. The strength of the South and of its people lies in their close relation to their Creator, and should we ever abandon that relation, all is lost. To the extent that we nurture that relation, all shall be gained in God's time. It is not possible, I postulate, for the South to fail at its task, for its task is no other than God's task.

BDC Exactly—why would the South fight for a “white supremacist” government? In both north and South, it already was such. Equality is a religion and there is a tension between equality and liberty (that Vanauken discusses) and that De Tocqueville doesn't do well in laying out.

Lincoln sparked the tensions between the Southern States and the northern into war expressly by fanning the north's own sense of superiority and race hatred in his Cooper Union Speech. You know the one, "This house cannot stand half slave and half free, it will

become all one or all the other". That was code in his day for “The Blacks are coming to live across the street—elect me and I'll stop their spread”. Throughout his presidency Lincoln pushed for funds to ship the blacks to Africa, because as he stated over and over throughout his political career, he believed the black race to be inferior, a belief shared by nearly the entire known world at that time, based on the error in logic to which I refer above.

MKA I was just reading De Tocqueville's discussion of the shipping of blacks to Liberia!

BDC This concept of race is modern. To illustrate, may I refer to the Greeks for example who were aggressively proud of their culture as well. Indeed, when they came under Roman domination, it was Greek culture that the Romans largely adopted and onto which they hung "Roman clothes" so to speak. So that to be considered educated and literate in the ancient world meant being able to speak and read Greek and being familiar with Greek literature (which explains why the New Testament was written in Greek). In fact, when the ancients spoke of race, they were speaking almost exclusively about culture (my gods are bigger and better than yours and the way they've taught us to live is better as well). As an example, the ancient pagan man of letters, Philostratus, who led a revival of Greek cultural chauvinism in the late second and early third centuries AD he himself named the Second Sophistic, the first having occurred in the Greece of Socrates and Plato, and whose book, *Vita Apollonii* (The Life of Apollonius of Tyana), became extremely important in the further development that the late Roman Empire would take, described his hero, Apollonius, as being a model Greek, speaker of impeccable Attic (Athenian) Greek and defender of Greek religion, despite Apollonius being a native of what is now modern Turkey and not ethnically or natively a Greek at all. Today however, when we speak of race, the features of the issue having to do with culture and the necessary connection to class systems has been attached to a view of race that only came into existence in the years after 1865. It did so because of the interplay between what Lincoln wrought in the 1860s in North America and what Bismarck wrought in Germany during that same decade.

MKA Now there's a Big Thesis! But, on first glance, I'd have to agree with you. Racism was not a flash point for those ancient cultures; not that I recall. The flash point was the enormous cultural difference between the Greek "West" and the "East" of the Persians (and others).

BDC Getting back to Germany, all this modern racial superiority crap comes from the German Romantic movement, which was a reaction to French Rationalism and Rousseau's critique of it. Whatever prejudices the founders had, were based on their preference for the Christian Culture by which they were surrounded and which informed their world view not "modern" racism. That is the old "racism" as the social utopians want to label it—the idea that my culture (founded on my Gnosticism) is superior. The degree to which humanity has attached same to "race" or ethnicity is the error in logic that has been so pernicious when combined with the modern racism.

MKA And this thesis is one that deserves more attention, for I believe you may be right in asserting that the promotion of one's culture has become linked with "racism", and that the linkage is simply, like so many other cultural demons, an error in logic. It would be fun to trace the error down to its name in formal logic.

BDC Interesting yes—but Catch 22 applies. Until race as a political weapon is constrained, the ability to treat this subject objectively (which might help end the use of race as a political weapon) is unlikely. Modern racism came from that German critique coupled with the advent of Mendel's discovery of genetics in 1864 and the unique and devastating recasting of the source of human culture propounded by Fichte, Nietzsche, Herder, etc.

MKA It is interesting, to say the least, that modern conceptions of racism are rarely discussed as to their validity as conceptions at all. Ashley Montague et alii did, however, discuss precisely that thesis in a book whose title now escapes me. The main thesis of the book, however, was that there is, technically, no such thing as "race"; that, from the scientific standpoint, all human beings can

produce children with each other, no matter what their colour. I'm not a geneticist, but it strikes me that "racial" differences are fairly minute compared to cultural differences. With all the hyper-romanticism of Africa of late, one should remember that Africa, as a continent of cultures, produced very little in the way of anything important to human history. That is not my view; it is that of the English historian, Roberts, in his "History of the World".

BDC Again, precisely correct. If we were truly separate "races" we couldn't produce children with one another. What separates humanity is a lack of a common culture. Consider the world that the Star Trek entertainment puts forward—one where humanity has arrived at such a common culture. It glosses the particulars for obvious reasons—but of most interest is its Prime Directive—no contact with "lesser" civilizations until they've "evolved" to an adequate point where relations absent the potential for conflict can exist. This is also a gloss, but a telling one. Cultures rubbing up against one another is where new cultures get created and where history is made. The Star Trek myth acknowledges the issue, but skirts it—perhaps because as I have argued—there is no real solution, Prime Directive or no; but for the plot line to work something has to be put forward in this regard. That German recasting was based on their acceptance of the belief that French Rationalism had in fact killed the very idea of God and hence religion.

If religion wasn't available to found culture and culture to found law, then as Nietzsche argued, humanity was going to have to find supermen who could through their Will to Power (Will zur Macht) create the new culture. He stated such because he and the other German Romantics knew that culture comes from religion and that if the old ones were dead, a new one had to be created by those Supermen, because they were unwilling to live in the inevitably resulting cultureless void of the egalitarians' creation. A reaction to the egalitarians that had been building from the early 1800s in Germany's Sturm and Drang movement, but did not burst upon the world scene until the late 1800s. Nietzsche's famous "God is dead" and the last men, those "men without chests"—men without culture—which is to say not human at all). The egalitarians' use of race as a political weapon, by defining any other culture other than the one they wanted to create as racist, and in so doing painting those that wished to defend their culture against that proposed by the egalitarians were painted into the a corner between these two falsehoods.

MKA I think your strong point here is bringing up the idea that race itself is used nowadays as a politico-cultural weapon. Worthy of an essay unto itself.

BDC In Germany, the cornering resulted in defining the source of culture in racial terms (Aryan supremacy) and justified its murder of 'inferior' races in the name of defending German culture. The agent of such horror (its "hero" if you will), of course was Herr Hitler. A result that makes the old American ideal (inspired by its source in Christian Romanticism) of tolerance, (growing from its method of managing the inescapable conflicts described above), perhaps best exemplified by Robert E. Lee, look positively wonderful in comparison to the hero of modern race politics, no?

MKA Yes.

BDC All of that “cornering dynamic” postdated the War of Northern Aggression. It entered the American experience precisely due to the need for the north to paint its war in terms other than what really occurred—the degree to which folks associate the South's fight with eugenics and racialism is indeed buying into the northern myth.

MKA And that myth has become, *de facto* and *de jure*, doctrine.

BDC As I've said in another context, this country was put back together and held together through the ruthless and cynical use of race politics to the detriment of us all. If race politics truly were to end—the end of this government would quickly ensue. And that myth, put into place around 1900, which formed the basis for northern Progressivism that required Jim Crow laws in the South, just as they had existed in the north from the early 1800s, Progressivism being the US version of the radical French Rationalist/Romantic informed governments....

MKA Progressivism as the extension of French radicalism; another point worth its own essay. One would want to dig past Rousseau into Diderot for example.

BDC ...in Europe the most extreme of which was the old USSR against those of the German Romantic informed government of Nazi Germany joined with the one of the Eastern versions of the Old Romantic informed governments, Japan, which was the embodiment of what happens when a non-Christian-based culture of ancient source gets its hands on modern weapons of mass destruction, whose fights with one another produced the blood bath called the 20th century. And indeed, it has not ended in the 21st because we're heating up a fight with another of those cultures with an ancient foundation (Islam) which has access to even more destructive WMDs on the same mistaken foundations.

MKA Here I might slightly disagree, in that Islam is not very ancient at all. One could argue, as I do, that Islam is simply a spin-off of Judaism, a truly ancient culture. Prior to Mohammed, the peoples of the middle east did not share (much) in that ancient culture and belief system. You are correct when you say "heating up", though, since the war between the Christian West and the Islamic East (however clumsy the titles) is an old war, and one that was never concluded. President Bush and his pals seem to be nearly totally ignorant of that war.

BDC As you remark, Islam combines the pantheism of the Arab tribes with the Judaeo-Christian influences to which they were exposed (just as Christianity combined the Greek's mysticism and reason to the Hebrew's revelatory tradition)—all of that is ancient. (For me of course, anything prior to yesterday is ancient :-) But it's not just Bush—America, being idealistic and almost completely uninterested in philosophy, even that which inspired its own creation, is blissfully ignorant of the history (that conflict of cultures) into which it dares step to rectify ancient error. It is precisely that ignorance that breeds this continued race nonsense as if somehow one's skin pigmentation, or ethnic origin prevents one form absorbing the attitudes necessary to be a real human being. Indeed, the north shared the exact same prejudice against blacks prior to 1865. So explaining the South's fight has to be on some other grounds than a racial attitude both held, a racial attitude as I assert that was not the modern one, because the modern one developed in the aftermath of the war, not prior to it. As long as that idea persists, the north will have us right where they want us (and the world on the verge of a new totalitarianism) forever. As for me, I prefer the Christian Romanticism of the South—and am willing to live with the modern dishonest characterization of my preference in that regard as racist. I am so because I am unwilling to surrender what I believe to get those who propound these false definitions to cease using them as a club to corner me into giving up what I believe.

Finally, we must, in light of getting better educated about these matters we must begin speaking truth to power. After all, the Southern creators of the original American experiment in ordered liberty, an experiment which itself was co-creator of our modern world more in its coerced failing than in its creation, were familiar with them far better than we.

MKA To speak the truth to power seems to me the finial of human existence, considering the power of the powerful.

BDC For me, that means taking every opportunity to tear down Lincoln and the myth of him and the "history" built on that myth that founds the current version of the US government, which is not the government the founders thought they were creating; instead allowing the development of a government behaving today in the world (in reaction to the opposition that behavior itself has helped create) in ways that those who founded this country would find horrifying. It also means speaking aloud the words Southern Independence to all I have an opportunity to do so, to display the Confederate Flag to the near exclusion of the US flag, and also doing subtle things such as refusing to say the Pledge of Allegiance (which I've refused to do since I was 10 years old in northern public schools).

MKA Interestingly, I have refused to say the "Pledge" since 8th grade. Still don't. And won't.

BDC ...and the public opportunities such refusal provides to explain exactly why I so refuse. For me, to do less, is to participate in the corruption of the founders' experiment in ordered liberty, for it is always corrupting to claim to be one thing while being in fact another.

MKA I'm fond of reminding folks that there are two basic forms of secession: political and personal. The political form may take a while, but meanwhile I, and others, have already seceded as persons.

BDC And how ironic that Lord of the Rings—*Return of the King* is playing in theaters even as I write this epistle. Tolkien wrote his epic masterpiece of Liberty versus the corrupting influence of Power [The Lord of the Rings Trilogy] during nearly the same decades that the slaughters to which I refer were unfolding and during which Antonio Gramsci was formulating his poisons. Indeed, Tolkien's Gollum may be the most horrifying example in literature for the corruption that the desire for power and the lying about the desire for its possession can produce in a being.

MKA I read somewhere where Tolkien said that he did not specifically call out "religion" in his Trilogy because he believed it would be self-evident to all.

BDC It is perhaps also not an accident, that The Twelve Southerners of Vanderbilt were writing *I'll Take my Stand* near those same decades. Unless the broader US population comes to understand these facts and the greater danger of allowing it to proceed (namely, in my opinion, WWIII, along with the eventual total destruction of the spiritual base on which the remnants of liberty still barely cling), they will choose to live with the devil they know. I recommend rereading CS Lewis, converted through the influence of Tolkien to Christianity, *The Screwtape Letters*, through the filter of the argument I have presented.

We are not going to ever have and should not expect help from the broader society (media, etc.). We're going to have to do that one person at a time until a critical mass is reached and I believe we are going to reach it, because I worship One who has taught never to give up hope.

MKA To quote an old song ("Sky Pilot"), "With God, you're never alone." Beyond aloneness, with God all things are possible, which is why to love Him and His creation makes one an optimist.

BDC The reaction I get from the folks with whom I speak about these matters as I am able, is typically, "Yes, we'd be better off independent, but how are we ever gonna get there?" Well, as the Chinese say, the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. If we keep steppin', we may even reach it by the 150th anniversary of the firing on Fort Sumter—and wouldn't that be a hoot!

MKA Yes, it would be a major hoot. But, as you say, one step at a time, and well thought out steps at that, together with a renewed (always renewed) reliance upon our God.

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