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The Sumter Factor

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As many know, the South was brilliantly suckered into firing on Fort Sumter on that fateful April day in 1861. When Lincoln wrote his memo of 29 March 1861, ordering that "an expedition, to move by sea, be got ready to sail as early as the 6th of April next", both he and his cabinet knew that war was to be the result.

As Webb Garrison put it in The Lincoln No One Knows:

"There was no longer a question of whether war would erupt in Charleston Harbor, but only a matter of when the first shots would be fired and who would be blamed for igniting the tinderbox."

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As events unfolded, the South received the blame, and Lincoln got his 75,000 men "to cause the laws to be duly executed". The most famous and notorious war in the history of the world was about to begin.

Lincoln's sucker punch worked. The South fired on Fort Sumter (or "Fort Sumpter", as Lincoln called it). By doing so, the South put itself in the position of the aggressor, and ultimately distanced itself from the support of Europe, as well as inflaming the many yankees who, until Sumter, had no stomach for a war between the States.

How does that little history lesson apply to the Southern Movement today? I wish to call attention to what I call the Sumter Factor.

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In March of 2005, the first Southern National Congress meets in Montgomery, Alabama (the first capitol of the Confederate States of America). At the close of those deliberations, Southerners will once more have a collective voice to speak for them, much the way that the Iraqi National Congress spoke for Iraqis during Saddam Hussein's dictatorship. Because of the historical significance of the Southern National Congress, which, after all, is not just another "neo-Confederate" editorial but a real political statement by Southerners, we must now prepare for the possibility that the empire will use the Sumter Factor in its opposition.

This Sumter Factor will, most likely, take the form of a "violent and splashy event that will, in one fell swoop, silence the Southern movement." Perhaps a Waco-style imperial posse descending upon the South. Perhaps another Kent State-style series of murders. Perhaps a simple media distortion (we know exactly how proficient the media are at that task). There are many possibilities.

Because these possibilities have historical antecedents to give them substance, I call upon those in the Southern Movement to take the time to anticipate the Sumter Factor. We should be smarter this time. No Southern dueling mentality this time. No, this time we use our noggins for something besides a hatrack.

The first step is to anticipate the attack, whether it be a feint or an all-out assault. The next step is to outwit the attackers. The tactics to do so are legion; too many to list here. And perhaps it is not wise to list them anyway. After all, one of the tactics is surprise. One might conclude, however, that simply naming the concept and then using that name (the Sumter Factor is the name I use) will go a long way to refuting any possible attack, either physical or propagandistic.

We do not know whether our modern Sumter will take the form of outright violence or the more standard yankee technique of forced compliance ("Do what we tell you to do or else"). But that fact means we should prepare all the more.

Perhaps the new Sumter will be some addle-brained Southerner (perhaps recruited by the FBI or one of the other acronymically challenged imperial agencies) who will play right into the hands of the empire by stupidly committing some atrocious act of violence.

Perhaps the new Sumter will take the form of infiltration by imperial secret police, who will then ensure that Something Very Stupid takes place within the Southern Movement.

Who knows? All we know for sure is that the Sumter Factor is a good bet to play itself out again.

This time there is no excuse. We should be ready. If nothing else, we should at least be on record as awaiting just such a predictable yankee move.

May God bless the South and her people.