



Revised History

Abraham Lincoln The Mystic

By Al Benson Jr., July 25th, 2022

Years ago now, I heard the eminent professor from Emory University, Donald Livingston, give a speech about Abraham Lincoln. In that speech he noted that “Lincoln wanted a war.” How right he was! The comments below will bear out his contention.

I’ve been going through a book by Frank van der Linden called “Lincoln the Road to War.” I don’t agree with all of van der Linden’s conclusions, and he based the real reason for the war as being slavery, which, obviously, I disagree with. But he did raise some interesting points. He observed, on page 183 that “In all three states (North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia) the citizens were saying by their votes that they were not ready to plunge into secession—not yet.”

“They hoped the ‘Peace Convention’ could devise some formula to patch up the Union and they wished to wait and see the outcome. But they would not be submissionists—a dirty word in the South, meaning those who would submit to anything Lincoln might do...Lincoln failed to understand the Southerners’ emotions. He misinterpreted the election returns as indicating a strong ‘Union forever’ sentiment against the secessionists, whom he considered merely a little band of troublemakers. His blindness to the masses’ instinctive aversion to any federal ‘coercion’ caused him to follow a totally mistaken policy of firmly opposing compromise.”

Van der Linden told us that Lincoln was a disciple of Alexander Hamilton, who believed in a strong central government where the states had almost no rights. He noted, from a speech Lincoln gave in Indianapolis that: “His Indianapolis speech was the first clue to Mr. Lincoln’s mystic, almost religious belief that the Union, which he revered, was somehow older than the states that created it—and too sacred ever to be broken.” Others have noticed this same odd view that Lincoln had of the Union—that it was somehow older than the states that created it. It seems to be a mystery where Lincoln came up with such aberrant political theology—because that’s really what it was—political theology.

Webb Garrison, author of “Lincoln’s Little War” noted the same thing. He wrote: “To Lincoln, the Union existed before the Declaration of Independence was announced and the Constitution was framed. These documents of freedom nurtured and matured the Union, but they did not create it. Perpetual and indivisible, the mystical Union was a preexistent bond whose nature a few keen-sighted patriots dimly glimpsed when the United States of America was formed.” Garrison also noted, quite accurately that: “Since Lincoln was far more mystical in outlook than is generally recognized, that aspect of his thought must be taken seriously.”

That has not been done. Lincoln’s mystical conception of a Union that existed before the states created it has been all but overlooked by those eager to enthrone Lincoln as the political savior of the universe.

Indeed, Garrison told us that his countrymen, by engaging in “readoption of the Declaration of Independence...could wage the Second American Revolution and, when this was accomplished, then slavery would be gone. It’s almost as if Lincoln had a messiah complex and he was going to get rid of slavery by “ramrod, wreckage, and ruin” of the Southern states. This is the mentality (possibly somewhat unbalanced?) that bestowed upon the country the War of Northern Aggression.