



Revised History

What Did the Founders Think of Secession?

By Al Benson Jr., July 9th, 2022

It is a fact of history that most people, especially in the South, viewed the Constitution as a compact, by which the sovereign states gathered and delegated (but did not surrender) a portion of their power to a federal governing body. The federal government was, in a sense, supposed to be a delegate for the several states, given certain things to do for the states that were more difficult for them to handle individually.

Since all the states had entered the constitutional compact individually, one at a time, they could have seceded the same way. It is quite clear from some of the language in the ratification ordinances that the states felt they had the right to secede if this new federal union did not work out according to plan. The delegates from Virginia clearly expressed the right of secession when they wrote: "We the delegates of the people of Virginia, duly elected...do, in the name and behalf of the people of Virginia, declare and make known, that the powers granted under the Constitution, being derived from the people of the United States, may be resumed by them, whenever the same shall be perverted to their injury or oppression."

New York's ratification statement read much the same way: "That the powers of government may be resumed by the people whensoever it shall become necessary to their happiness; that every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not, by the said Constitution, delegated to the Congress of the United States, or the departments thereof, remains to the people of the several states, or to their respective State governments, to whom they have granted the same." If secession was treason as so many political liars today allege, then why was this secession language allowed to remain in the ratification ordinances of some of the states?

You can see, by the very nature of the wording of these ratification ordinances, that these people were signing on to a whole different concept of "Union" than we operate under in our day. And, despite the election-time rhetoric of our current crop of political liars, what exactly is the nature of today's "Union"? I contend that, since the time of the conclusion of the shooting phase of the War of Northern Aggression, most politicians have rushed to embrace Lincoln's view of the Union. Only problem is—Lincoln's view of the Union was about 180 degrees opposite of the view of the Founders. Webb Garrison, author of *The Lincoln No One Knows* noted that Lincoln continually: "...insisted that the Union existed before the Constitution was framed and adopted. 'The Union is much older than the Constitution,' he held...According to Lincoln's line of thought, the Constitution was secondary to the Union because it succeeded it in time. Though the Constitution should be respected and followed, 'a little bending of it' was justified if that was needed to preserve the Union." Would I be too far off if I considered this attitude sort of an 1860s version of 'the end justifies the means'?

In Lincoln's convoluted thinking, this pre-Constitutional Union was eternal, so that no state could secede—in direct opposition to the ratification ordinances of some of the states, North and South! Alexander H. Stephens, vice-president of the Confederacy, noted of Lincoln that, "The Union with him, in sentiment rose to the sublimity of a religious mysticism." Again, author Webb Garrison told us that: "By the end of 1864, the identification between himself and the Union became so complete that he was the Union."

So where did Lincoln get his view of this "eternal Union"? Considering all that we have gone through in this country since 1865, with the resultant apotheosis of Abraham Lincoln, I might be tempted to ask—in Lincoln's mind, was the Union 'god' and was he (Lincoln) the Union? The Union is not eternal. Only God is eternal. All else will pass away in time. If this country does not turn from its present direction, the very least it can expect

from the Almighty may be the reduction to the status of some third world country. Our present "leadership" is working mightily toward that direction. And if the Union is eternal, then it must have existed long before any Europeans came here, or even the Indians. And if, for whatever reason God is pleased to phase out the United States at some point, according to Lincoln's weird reasoning, the Union will still exist. Does it begin to come across to you how ridiculous Lincoln's line of thought was? And for this reason, over 700,000 lives were lost in a war we did not need to have.

If only we have eyes to see, we should be able to discern that Lincoln's "indestructible" Union is falling down around our ears! And the current Regime in Washington loves to have it so, to the point where they are working to make it happen. How much better to have had constitutionally allowed secession. Lincoln's "preservation" of the Union destroyed it.