

The John Locke Society

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"It was an age gone with the wind . . ."
Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*

It is standard fare of Southern lore that the Confederacy represents all that was noble and grand and that losing the Civil War — known in the South as the "War Between the States" — was a catastrophe hitherto unknown on any scale. This argument, however popular it may be, is simply and fatally flawed.

The South today, as in the pre-Civil War years, exerts on a national scale a disproportionately large influence on political, social and economic issues, including in recent years the domination of the Presidency and the House of Representatives. Dixie's present day power and influence exists entirely in its being a part of the United States as a whole. Only by staying within the Union has the South been able to exert this disproportionate influence. Indeed, had its attempted secession been a success, it is unlikely that the Confederacy would even exist as such as the individual Southern states would have ended up fighting over the same issues which then divided the South and North, such as states' rights and the moral quandary of slavery. Further, had the Confederacy been successful it is rebellion, the United States would have degenerated into two nations, each far weaker than the two combined and individually unable to enjoy the political and economic success that the Union collectively enjoys today. The South's economy, deprived of the North's ports and industry, would have had its fortunes greatly reduced rather than becoming the economic powerhouse that it is at present. Losing to the North, though painful at the time, was ultimately beneficial for Dixie.

But, the Chairman reflects, the South's continued presence within the Union has not all been entirely rosy. Only a Yankee would argue that losing was good for Dixie. The North has infected the South with its liberal policies and values that have harmed Southerners and resulted in moral decay. Had the Confederacy survived, Dixie would now be a bastion of true conservatism with all the benefits this entails rather than the situation today where conservatives are outnumbered by liberals, particularly those from the North. Historical events subsequent to the War Between the States validate the fact that the South would be better off having won since its culture, economy and politics would not now be dominated by the North. As a result of winning, the South today would be more moral and more prosperous. Additionally, in the last fifty years the concept of states' rights has been turned on its head. In a victorious Confederacy, the Southern states would at least have a far greater degree of autonomy than they do today and would possess the Confederate constitutional right to secede from the Confederacy, thereby preserving the ultimate state right.

It is to resolve this provocative historical controversy that the Chairman solicits the views of Members and guests of the John Locke Society, who are invited to make their attendance at the fifth *Ronald Wilson Reagan Debate Caucus* and thereby engage in the sure to be lively debate

Resolved: Losing was Good for Dixie.

The Society will assemble **Thursday, September 30th**, in the Weatherford Room of the Royal Oaks Country Club (7915 Greenville Avenue, Dallas). The Provostery will open at **6:30 p.m.** (finger sandwiches, select cheeses, and a cash bar are available). The Chairman will gavel the Caucus to order at precisely **7:15 p.m.** Gentlemen are reminded to adorn proper neckwear; ladies should adhere to a similar sartorial standard. Literary presentations are encouraged. Please direct questions to the Chairman at 972-417-1916.