

Confederates cheer rewrite of the Gettysburg Address

by Rochelle J. Ascher

Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America

by Garry Wills

Simon and Schuster, New York, 1992

315 pages, hardbound, \$23

The author, a political prisoner serving a 10-year sentence, was the first associate of Lyndon LaRouche convicted in the Virginia "get LaRouche" frameups.

Garry Wills's bestseller on the Gettysburg Address, put simply, is a poorly disguised apology for the Confederacy, which is otherwise enjoying a massive revival in print and electronic media. As *EIR* has documented, there is a world of difference between Lincoln's own "with malice toward none, with charity toward all," including his honoring of the brave soldiers from both sides, and the present, fashionable moral indifference of promoting the Confederate world outlook.

The polite reviews of establishment publications do not utter these facts, but the truth behind the revival came out in a review that appeared last summer in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, the leading newspaper in the capital of the old Confederacy. That review, by Prof. James Robertson, Miles Professor of History at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, is more honest about what Garry Wills hoped to achieve, compared to the reviews by George Will in the *Washington Post*, or Jeffrey Hart in William F. Buckley's *National Review*. Robertson openly approves of Wills's misrepresentation of Lincoln in furtherance of the Confederacy revival.

"Once upon a time in the not-too-distant past," Robertson

writes, "schoolchildren memorized the Gettysburg Address; orators with trembling voices recounted how, divinely inspired, it was written at the last moment on the back of an envelope; few patriotic programs occurred without some appropriate person reciting the Address to tearful audiences.

"Times change. In this new—joltingly new—analysis of Abraham Lincoln's most famous utterance, Garry Wills portrays the Address as an enigmatic production, a carefully concocted speech, a swindle of sorts, a 'verbal coup,' and a document that rebuffed the Declaration of Independence and rewrote the U.S. Constitution.

"In his Gettysburg remarks, Lincoln referred to the Declaration bringing forth 'a new nation.' The overriding point here is that the President referred to the United States in the singular. The original 13 colonies became 13 separate sovereign states; and in joining together as a nation, the states had not merely relinquished all power for the common good, Lincoln inferred, the states were 'dedicated to' that oneness.

"Thus, membership in the Union was irrevocable rather than voluntary. Put another way, Lincoln was implying at Gettysburg, and in the middle of a civil war that secession was illegal [sic]. Lincoln was apparently unconcerned about what any court of law might say at some later date.

"Lincoln went even further in his Gettysburg Address. Self-government was the world's last hope for survival-without freedom. 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people' must be imperishable. Yet such self-government, Wills shows, was precisely what the Southern Confederacy was seeking to obtain. The South had no desire to destroy that same kind of rule in the North; it merely wanted to take its liberty and go its own way.

"This Lincoln refused to condone. He employed armed forces to make self-government strictly a Union-controlled

instrument. In other words, Lincoln at Gettysburg reaffirmed nothing; he instead called up a new nation that clearly *repudiated* the Declaration of Independence's principle that good men have the right to overthrow bad government. Since the North ultimately won the Civil War and wrote the majority of history books about the struggle, Lincoln's words have come down through the ages as a call to duty rather than a clever but misleading statement of America's federation and rules."

Spoken like a true Confederate! But a more honest and clear statement of what Wills says. Wills's academic trappings say the same thing in a form intended to be more *palatable*.

Why was this book on the bestseller lists? Certainly not because so many people are reading it—Wills is so difficult and convoluted that very few people could make it through this book. Its purpose is to rewrite history from the standpoint of legitimizing the Confederacy.

Stephen Douglas revisited

After having recently re-read the Lincoln-Douglas debates, it immediately struck this reviewer how exactly Wills's arguments parallel those of the pro-slavery traitor Stephen Douglas. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which overturned the Missouri Compromise under the guise of "popular sovereignty/states' rights" (i. e., allowing each territory to "decide" whether it would enter the Union slave or free) instigated bloody battles between abolitionists and slaveholders in the Nebraska Territories. In combination with the British-owned President Buchanan and his ally Chief Justice Roger Taney, this group of "conspirators," as Lincoln called them, followed the Kansas-Nebraska Act with the *Dred Scott* decision and started the Civil War.

Wills's central thesis is the same as Stephen Douglas's—that Lincoln "rewrote" the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. Wills says:

"He *altered* the document from within, by appeal from its letter to the spirit, subtly changing the recalcitrant stuff of that legal compromise, bringing it to its own indictment. By implicitly doing this, he performed one of the *most daring acts of open-air sleight of hand ever witnessed by the unsuspecting. Everyone in that vast throng of thousands was having his or her intellectual pocket picked*. The crowd departed with a new thing in its ideological baggage, that *new Constitution Lincoln had substituted for the one they brought there with them*. They walked off, from those curving graves on the hillside, under a changed sky, into a different America. Lincoln had revolutionized the Revolution, giving people a new past to live with that would change their future indefinitely.

"Some people, looking on from a distance, saw that a *giant (if benign) swindle* had been performed. The *Chicago Times* quoted the letter of the Constitution to Lincoln—noting its lack of reference to equality, its tolerance of slavery—

and said that Lincoln was betraying the instrument he was on oath to defend, traducing the men who died for the letter of that fundamental law:

" 'It was to uphold this Constitution, and the Union created by it, that our officers and soldiers gave their lives at Gettysburg. How dare he, then, standing on their graves, mistake the cause for which they died, and libel the statesmen who founded the government? They were men possessing too much self-respect to declare that negroes were their equals or were entitled to equal privileges' " (emphasis added).

This "sleight of hand" argument by Wills, that Lincoln "changed" the meaning of the Declaration and Constitution is his central thesis—both in terms of the question of slavery and the question of states' rights.

The Lincoln-Douglas debates show that Lincoln himself settled the same lying argument that Wills makes, in the 175 speeches he gave on the question of slavery and the Constitution between 1854 and 1860—and most beautifully in the seven debates, lasting 21 hours, with Stephen Douglas. Since Wills and Douglas's arguments are the same, the reader would be far better off reading the 350 pages of the debates that appear in Lincoln's *Collected Works* than to labor through this book.

On the question of slavery, and "changing" the intent of the founding fathers who wrote the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, the following from Lincoln and Douglas summarize how opposite their views of the founders' intent were.

Douglas says:

"Now, I say to you, my fellow-citizens, that in my opinion, the signers of the Declaration [of Independence] had no reference to the negro whatever when they declared all men to be created equal. They desired to express by that phrase, *white men*, men of European birth and European descent, and had no reference either to the negro, the savage Indians, the Fejee [sic], the Malay, or any other inferior and degraded race, when they spoke of the equality of men. . . ."

And again:

"Lincoln maintains that the Declaration of Independence asserts that the negro is equal to the white man, and that under Divine Law, and if he believes so it was rational for him to advocate negro citizenship, which, when allowed, puts the negro on an equality under the law. I say to you in all frankness, gentlemen, that in my opinion a negro is not a citizen, cannot be, and ought not to be under the Constitution of the United States. I will not even qualify my opinion to meet the declaration of one of the Judges of the Supreme Court in the *Dred Scott* case [Taney], 'that a negro descended from African parents, who was imported into this country as a slave, is not a citizen, and cannot be.' I say that this government was established on the white basis. It was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and should never be administered by any except white men. I declare that a negro ought not to be a citizen,

whether his parents were imported into this country as slaves or not, or whether or not he was born here. It does not depend upon the place a negro's parents were born, or whether they were slaves or not, but upon the fact that he is a negro, belonging to a race incapable of self-government, and for that reason ought not to be on an equality with white men."

And this from a man who was considered too anti-slavery to be the nominee of Southern Democrats in the 1860 presidential election; in fact, the Democratic Party split in two, because the Southerners considered Douglas too pro-Negro!

Lincoln's response to Douglas during the debates reflects a view that was consistent throughout his lifetime: "I should like to know if, taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are created equal upon principle, and making exceptions to it, where will it stop? If one man says it does not mean a negro, why may not another say it does not mean some other man? If that declaration is not the truth, let us get out the statute book in which we find it and tear it out!"

He continues:

"It is equally impossible to not see that that common object is to subvert, in the public mind, and in practical administration, our old and only standard of free government, that 'all men are created equal,' and to substitute for it some different standard. What that substitute is to be is not difficult to perceive. It is to deny the equality of men, and to assert the natural, moral, and religious right of one class to enslave another."

Finally, Lincoln proves that the Douglas doctrine was a "new principle—this new proposition that no human being ever thought of three years ago":

"I wish to return Judge Douglas my profound thanks for his public annunciation here to-day, to be put on record, that his system of policy in regard to the institution of *slavery contemplates that it shall last forever*. . . . Judge Douglas asks you 'why cannot the institution of slavery, or rather, why cannot the nation, part slave and part free, continue as your fathers made it *forever*?' In the first place, I insist that our fathers *did not* make this nation half slave and half free, or part slave and part free. I insist that they found the institution of slavery existing here. They did not make it so, but they left it so because they knew of no way to get rid of it at the time. When Judge Douglas undertakes to say that as a matter of choice the fathers of the government made this nation part slave and part free, *he assumes what is historically a falsehood*. More than that, when the fathers of the government cut off the source of slavery by the abolition of the slave trade, and adopted a system of restricting it from the new Territories where it had not existed, I maintain that they placed it where they understood, and all sensible men understood it was in the course of *ultimate extinction*" (emphasis in original).

And finally:

"I think the author of that notable instrument intended to

include *all* men, but they did not mean to declare all men equal *in all respects*. They did not mean to say that all men were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what they did consider all men created equal—equal in certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. *This they said and this they meant*. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth, that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet, that they were about to confer it immediately. . . . They meant simply to declare the *right*, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

"They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society which should be familiar to all: constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people, of all colors everywhere."

Wills's states' rights sophistry

Wills makes the same argument regarding "the nation" and "states' rights" that he makes regarding slavery—that Lincoln, "by sleight of hand," changed the view of the founding fathers in his speech at Gettysburg. Wills points, as do many others, to the fact that before Gettysburg, the common usage was to refer to the United States in the plural, (the United States *are*), and that after Lincoln's "revolution" at Gettysburg, usage became singular (the United States *is*).

This states' rights argument put forward by Wills is nothing more than a *Confederate* argument that began to gain currency in 1832, when South Carolina threatened to secede over the 1828 "Tariff of Abominations" (the highest U.S. tariff in history pushed through by the Clay Whigs). It is no accident that South Carolina's "constitution" was written by John Locke, as a "social contract." Lincoln repeatedly points out that the U.S. Constitution is based on natural law, which views man as made in the image of God, not a Lockean social contract where the role of government is to regulate conflict among the beasts. Again, this did not change at Gettysburg—this was the issue fought out by the founding fathers when they replaced the Articles of *Confederation* with a Constitution written by Hamilton and Franklin. Lincoln says, in his First Inaugural, that the people's existence precedes and makes possible the Constitution, otherwise, "The United States [would] be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of a contract [or pact] merely."

And in a special address to Congress on July 4, 1861, Lincoln destroys forever the arguments of states' rights.

"This sophism," Lincoln says, referring to the states' rights argument for dissolution of the Union, "derives much—perhaps the whole—of its currency, from the assumption, pertaining to a State—to each State of our Federal Union. Our States have neither more, or less power, than that reserved to them, in the Union, by the Constitution, no

one of them ever having been a State *out* of the Union. The original ones passed into the Union even *before* they cast off their British colonial dependence; and the new ones each came into the Union directly from a condition of dependence, excepting Texas. And even Texas, in its temporary independence, was never designated a *State*. The new ones only took the designation of States, on coming into the Union, while that name was first adopted for the old ones, in, and by, the Declaration of Independence. Therein the 'United Colonies' were declared to be 'Free and Independent States,' but even then, the object plainly was not to declare their independence of *one another*, or of the *Union*, but directly the contrary, as their mutual pledge, and their mutual action before, at the time, and afterwards abundantly show. . . .

"The States have their *status* in the Union, and they have no other *legal status*. If they break from this, they can only do so against law, and by revolution. By conquest, or purchase, the Union gave each of them, whatever of independence, and liberty, it has. The Union is older than any of the States; and in fact, it created them as States. Originally, some dependent colonies made the Union, and, in turn, the Union threw off their old dependence, for them, and made them States, such as they are. Not one of them had a State Constitution, independent of the Union. Of course, it is not forgotten that all the new States framed their constitutions before they entered the Union; nevertheless, dependent upon, and preparatory to, coming into the Union.

"Unquestionably, the states have the powers, and rights reserved to them in, and by the National Constitution; but among these, surely are not included all conceivable powers, however mischievous, or destructive; but at most, such only, as were known in the world, at the time, as governmental powers; and certainly, a power to destroy the government itself, had never been known as a governmental—as a merely administrative power. This relative matter of National power, and States rights, as a principle, is no other than the principle of *generality* and *locality*. *Whatever concerns the whole should be confided to the whole—to the general government*; while whatever concerns *only* the State should be left exclusively, to the State" (emphasis in original).

Even during the debates, Lincoln makes clear that states' rights is a fraud. When Douglas introduces the doctrine of "popular sovereignty" with the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and declares it the "right" of the "people" of a territory to decide a fundamental constitutional question such as slavery, Lincoln responds that Douglas ensured that the *intent* of the founding fathers—that slavery would become "*ultimately extinct*"—would be changed to guarantee that slavery would become *national* and *perpetual*. Lincoln also collapses the argument of Douglas's "states rights" doctrine—since Douglas, who was the author of "popular sovereignty" was in fact in cahoots with Justice Roger Taney, whose *Dred Scott* decision (which considered slaves property able to be transported anywhere), *overturned* and *overrode* states rights. As Frederic Hender-

son has pointed out also, the Confederate states had no rights whatever under the Confederate Constitution, although states' rights was supposedly a major argument for secession (see *EIR*, Aug. 28, 1992).

In the first debate with Lincoln, Douglas contends:

"Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, and the great men of that day, made this Government divided into free states and slave states, and *left each state perfectly free to do as it pleased in the subject of slavery*. Why can it not exist on the same principles on which our fathers made it? They knew when they framed the Constitution that in a country as wide and broad as this, with such a variety of climate, production and interest, the people necessarily required different laws and institutions in different localities. They knew that the laws and regulations which would suit the granite hills of New Hampshire would be unsuited to the rice plantations of South Carolina, and they, therefore, provided that *each State should retain its own Legislature, and its own sovereignty, with the full and complete power to do as it pleased within its own limits, in all that was local and not national. One of the reserved rights of the States was the right to regulate the relations between Master and Servant, on the slavery question.*"

To which Lincoln responds:

"What was it . . . that this 'Little Giant' [Douglas] invented? It never occurred to Gen. Cass to call his discovery by the odd name of 'Popular Sovereignty.' He had not the impudence to say that the *right* of people to govern niggers was the right of people to govern themselves. His notions of the fitness of things were not moulded to the brazen degree of calling the right to put a hundred niggers under the lash in Nebraska '*a sacred right* of self-government.' And here, I submit to this intelligent audience and the whole world, was Judge Douglas' discovery and the whole of it. . . . He discovered that the right of the white man to breed and flog niggers in Nebraska was *popular sovereignty*" (emphasis in original).

The truth is that Lincoln did *not* rewrite the Declaration of Independence or the U. S. Constitution—he gave his life to guarantee the founding fathers' intent. What Wills refuses to admit is that it was the Confederacy, run by England, that rewrote the history of our founding documents, with the purpose of obliterating the nation and returning it to British rule.

Transcendentalism and the culture of death

Wills engages in two other major acts of intellectual fraud: The first involves the Transcendentalist movement, and the second is Wills's "structural" analysis of the Gettysburg address from the standpoint of Greek rhetoric.

Wills spends as much, if not more, time discussing Edward Everett, whose three-hour speech preceded Lincoln's at Gettysburg, than he does Lincoln's 272 words. Everett was the father of the U.S. Transcendentalist movement and the mentor of Ralph Waldo Emerson, among others. Starting

in the early 1800s, there was a vile effort to create a Kantian romantic movement in the U.S., which took the name Transcendentalism from Kant's notion of the transcendental. Starting in 1805, and picking up steam after the U.S. publication of Madame de Staël's book on Germany in 1814, the first Americans were deployed to Europe to study "the new German philosophy" of Kant and his interpreters. The first two Bostonians who made the trip to Europe were Edward Everett and George Ticknor. After spending two years studying Kant at Göttingen, they travelled throughout the continent, spending a great deal of time with the Madame de Staël, Schlegel, and Constant. Upon their return, they became the leaders of the first American Transcendentalists.

There are two aspects of Transcendentalism which are key wrecking operations against the United States. The first is the Kantian argument that human creativity is "unintelligible, unknowable"; the second is their "back to Mother Earth/Mother Nature" romantic outlook. Kant's view was that man's divine qualities, human creativity and human progress, the purposes for which the United States was founded, are freakish, mysterious entities, which cannot be deliberately understood and fostered by human beings. Since the purpose of the U.S. Constitution was precisely to nurture human creative progress, the Transcendentalist cabal was dedicated to wrecking the republic based on it. Not only

does Wills spend endless pages on this philosophy and its adherents, reprinting Everett's Gettysburg speech in full, but he maintains that Abraham Lincoln was a Transcendentalist!

Wills argues that Lincoln, by his speech at the cemetery at Gettysburg, was part of the Transcendentalist "rural cemetery movement!" Wills says: "The Transcendentalists played an important role in the cult of cemeteries as 'schools of life.'"

He refers to the 19th-century "cult of death," commenting that the "function of the cemetery as a training of the sensibilities was much on Everett's mind. He even suggested that children should be kept in instructive communion with the place by volunteer work on its upkeep."

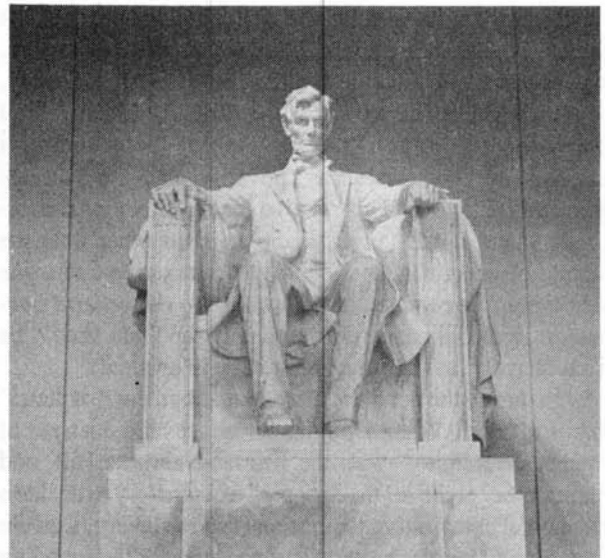
Wills goes on, speaking of Gettysburg, where Lincoln makes his address following the bloodiest battle of the bloodiest war in U.S. history, in which as many as 50,000 young men were killed or wounded: "The dedication of Gettysburg must, therefore, be seen in its cultural context, as part of the 19th century's fascination with death in general and with cemeteries in particular. We tend to view it only in its connection with the Civil War and military ceremonies, which were indeed the most immediate and compelling associations. But these did not entirely obliterate the larger and longer-standing pattern of response to the recurrent rites of dedicating new parts of nature to the care of the dead."

Address at Gettysburg

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which



they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth in freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

—November 19, 1863

Of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Everett's leading student, he points out: "Emerson dug up his son's body, after its decay, to contemplate it. (He also dug up his wife, and was raised by an aunt who wore her own shroud while alive and slept in a coffin-bed.)" Wills even references necrophiliac aspects of the Transcendentalists, which we will forgo here.

He continues: "There is something deeper in the connection between children, death, and the healing countryside that J. Hillis Miller had traced in Dickens's novels. The key to the fascination seems to be that childhood was seen as one of those *liminal* experiences that fascinated the romantics in general and the Transcendentalists in particular. The interest in dreams, revery, mesmerism, spiritualism, birth and death shared this liminality.

"The contemplation of nature that rural cemeteries were meant to foster was a threshold experience for the Transcendentalists. The horizon, where heaven touches earth, suggested the interplay of the ideal with the real—as did ponds mirroring heaven in the darkest groves. Afloat on such a pond, Emerson felt he was traversing a heaven of the mind: 'We penetrate this incredible beauty [of water], we dip our hands in this painted element; our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms.'

"The borderlines (limina) in nature appealed to people who saw, figured there, the great limits to knowledge and time and history they were meant to transcend: 'In every landscape the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and earth.' Liminal experiences—twilight, dreams, day-dreaming, melancholy, premonitions—were not fuzzings [sic] but intensifications of knowledge."

Wills prattles on for pages with this kind of Rousseauvian communing with nature, before he gets to his point regarding Lincoln. "The cemetery was the supreme locus of liminality in the 19th century. It was the borderland between life and death, time and eternity, past and future. . . .

"These, then, were some of the predispositions people brought to the dedication of a cemetery in the 1860s. Did Lincoln share in these attitudes? He shared them in spades. He was himself, funereal, almost to the point of caricature. Herndon wrote that 'melancholy dropped from him as he walked. . . .' Lincoln meditates on death and madness like a young Hamlet, even echoing Hamlet's words."

What was motivating Lincoln at Gettysburg, argues Wills, was his acute grief over the death of his son. "Though others were mourning for their military dead at Gettysburg, Lincoln's black hatband was recognized by some as a sign of grief for the dead boy," later adding: "Lincoln, like Jefferson, was a man of his own age; *but his age was the romantic era*, which breathes through the melancholy and brooding poetry he wrote in the 1840s. More to the point, his dialectic of ideals struggling for their realization in history owes a great deal to the primary intellectual fashion of his period, Transcendentalism. The Transcendentalists were theological Unitarians who, largely through the influence of Carlyle, adapted

German idealism to the study of American society. They saw the permanent ideal shining through the particulars of nature. 'Nature,' as Emerson put it, 'is the incarnation of a thought. . . . The world is mind precipitated.' Lincoln was bound to be affected by the rhetoric, assumptions and conscious ideals of the men who shaped his culture. This shows in his language, and can be partially traced in direct and indirect influences on his thinking. He knew, in different degrees, the work of the Transcendentalists—by minimal contact with Emerson himself, limited by deep contact with the thought of George Bancroft, and extensive exposure to Theodore Parker's views" (emphasis added).

From here Wills goes on to make his most outrageous charge, "that it was Bancroft's essential statement on Transcendentalism—his 1854 lecture on 'The Necessity, the Reality, and the Promise of the Progress of the Human Race' that served as the model for Lincoln's own most ambitious philological-philosophical exercise of the 1850s—his lecture on inventions." Nothing could be further from the truth. As the reader can see from the first few lines below, the speech Wills refers to, on "Discoveries and Inventions," which was Lincoln's favorite stump speech during his 1860 campaign, is a Leibnizian, scientific explication of man's creativity, as *imago viva Dei*, the living image of God who perfects God's creation through new technological advances. Worse for Wills, "Discoveries and Inventions" is clearly an attack on Transcendentalism:

"All creation is a mine, and every man a miner.

"The whole earth, and all *within* it, *upon* it, and *round about* it, including *himself*, in his physical, moral, and intellectual nature, and his susceptibilities, are the infinitely various 'leads' from which man, from the first, was to dig out his destiny.

"In the beginning, the mine was unopened, and the miner stood *naked*, and *knowledgeless*, *upon* it.

"Fishes, birds, beasts, and creeping things, are not miners, but *feeders* and *lodgers* merely. Beavers build houses; but they build them in nowise differently, or better now, than they did, five thousand years ago. Ants and honey bees provide food for winter; but just in the *same way* they did, when Solomon referred the sluggard to them as patterns of prudence.

"Man is not the only animal who labors; but he is the only one who *improves* his workmanship. This improvement he effects by *Discoveries* and *Inventions*. . ." (emphasis in original).

It is certainly no accident that the history of Lincoln and the United States from this period has been so utterly distorted. Wills is right when he says Bancroft's Transcendentalism "suffused his 10-volume *History of the U.S.*," the most widely read history of the period. Two of Lincoln's most noted biographers, John Hay, his secretary, and William Herndon, his law partner, were rabid Transcendentalists. Herndon was the "disciple of that most militant Tran-

scendentalist, Theodore Parker, whom Emerson called 'our Savonarola.' Hay later became secretary of state, and part of the Emerson "kindergarten" which ran the British-controlled Teddy Roosevelt administration.

The Confederacy's twin: radical abolitionism

Even Wills, however, is forced to admit that Lincoln absolutely disagreed with the Transcendentalists on radical abolitionism. As Anton Chaitkin documents in his book *Treason in America* (New York: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1985), the British oligarchy controlled not only the southern planter aristocracy which ran secession, but also the radical abolitionist movement, through their New England merchants and bankers. Theodore Parker, Herndon's mentor, was one of the leading funders of John Brown. Given that all of the leaders of the Transcendentalists had been "at one time" raving racists, their transformation to "radical abolitionism" was quite something—unless it is understood, as it was by Lincoln—as the British "countergang" to the slaveholding Confederacy. Unlike Lincoln, as Wills admits, "Parker and the Transcendentalists had no qualms about separation of the Union. Better secession of the South, he felt, than further spreading of its poisons in the North. The Union was not worth preserving, if that gave infection a larger body to pervade."

The Transcendentalists and others attacked Lincoln, first for not just letting the South go, and then for not moving fast enough on emancipation. The commonplace lie about the Emancipation Proclamation, that it was issued for military expediency and freed no slaves, covers up the fact that Lincoln and his allies like Henry Carey knew that the strategic policy of Great Britain was to break the Union into two or even several pieces—to balkanize and then reconquer the U.S.

Lincoln's refusal to "let the South go"—or to sign a separate peace as he was increasingly being urged to do in the darkest days of 1864—was what forced the British to kill him. His unswerving commitment to reunifying the country on the basis of *both* American System economics *and* the end of slavery, foiled British plans. To argue that he did not go fast enough or far enough was simply wrong.

The Emancipation Proclamation itself announced a new war aim—the overthrow of slavery by force of arms if and when Union armies conquered the South. Lincoln knew, however, that emancipation would not be irrevocable without a constitutional amendment. In 1864, Lincoln took the lead in getting the Republican Party national convention that renominated him to adopt a platform calling for a Thirteenth Amendment, prohibiting slavery everywhere in the United States. Because slavery "was hostile to the principles of republican government, justice, and national safety," the platform declared, Republicans vowed to accomplish its "utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the republic." After reelection, Lincoln threw his full weight behind the amendment,

which passed the House of Representatives in January 1865.

In her article on "Frederick Douglass and the Lincoln Tradition," Denise Henderson quotes from Douglass on this fundamental point (*New Federalist*, June 21, 1992). Douglass had broken with the radical abolitionists, including his former mentor, William Lloyd Garrison, whose policy was "that the first duty of the non-slaveholding States was to dissolve the Union with the slaveholding States." Douglass says: "After a time, a careful reconsideration of the subject convinced me that there was no necessity for dissolving the union between the northern and southern states, that to seek this dissolution was not part of my duty as an abolitionist." Furthermore, Lincoln called Douglass to the White House in mid-1863, for a meeting, during which Douglass was happy to discover that the President had not released the Emancipation Proclamation as a wartime measure:

"It was when General Grant was fighting his way through the wilderness to Richmond . . . that President Lincoln did me the honor to invite me to the Executive Mansion for a conference on the situation. . . . He wished to confer with me . . . as to the means most desirable to be employed outside the army to induce the slaves in the rebel states to come within the federal lines. The increasing opposition to the war, in the North, and the mad cry against it . . . alarmed Mr. Lincoln, and made him apprehensive that a peace might be forced upon him which would leave still in slavery all who had not come within our lines. What he wanted was to make his proclamation as effective as possible in the event of such a peace. He said, in a regretful tone, 'The slaves are not coming so rapidly and so numerously to us as I had hoped.' I replied that the slaveholders knew how to keep such things from their slaves, and probably very few knew of his proclamation. 'Well,' he said, 'I want you to set about devising some means of making them acquainted with it, and for bringing them into our lines.' . . . He said he was being accused of protracting the war beyond its legitimate object and of failing to make peace when he might have done so to advantage. He was afraid of what might come of all these complaints, but was persuaded that no solid and lasting peace could come short of absolute submission on the part of the rebels, and he was not for giving them rest. . . . He saw the danger of premature peace, and, like a thoughtful and sagacious man as he was, wished to provide means of rendering such consummation as harmless as possible. I was the more impressed by this benevolent consideration, because he before said, in answer to the peace clamor, that his object was to 'Save the Union,' and to do so with or without slavery. What he said on this day showed a deeper moral conviction against slavery than I had ever seen before in anything spoken or written by him. I listened with the deepest interest and profoundest satisfaction, and at his suggestion agreed to undertake the organizing of a band of scouts, composed of colored men, whose business should be . . . to go into the rebel states, beyond the lines of our armies, and carry the

news of emancipation, and urge the slaves to come within our boundaries.

"I refer to this conversation, because I think that, on Mr. Lincoln's part, it is evidence conclusive that the proclamation, so far at least as he was concerned, was not effected merely as a 'necessity.' "

In the worst days of his reelection campaign in 1864, when it was considered certain that he would lose the election to the "peace" candidate McClellan, several associates and cabinet members suggested attempting a "negotiated peace" with the Confederacy, based on renouncing the Emancipation Proclamation and legalizing slavery. Lincoln refused—more than 100,000 black soldiers were fighting for the Union and their efforts were crucial to the northern victory: "If they stake their lives for us they must be prompted by the strongest motive . . . the promise of freedom. And the promise being made must be kept. . . . There have been men who proposed to me to return to slavery the black warriors who risked their lives for the Union. I should be damned in time and in eternity for so doing. The world shall know that I will keep my faith to friends and enemies, come what will."

And, he said, to give the appearance of backing down on emancipation "would be worse than losing the presidential contest."

The 'Greek revival' hoax

Finally, Wills's arguments regarding the "style" and "structure" of the Gettysburg Address, are sheer fraud, to which he devotes several chapters—the most outrageous being, "Oratory of the Greek Revival." Wills takes us right back to the Transcendentalists—since, of course, Everett, Emerson, Bancroft and company were first and foremost Greek scholars, committed to "the revival of Periclean Athenian democracy" in the United States. Lincoln not only abhorred this "pure democracy," libertarian romanticism, of an Andrew Jackson, for example, but he also fought against it all his life. It was this "mob democracy" which Jackson invoked, attacking everything having to do with the American System of economics, whether internal improvements, the National Bank of the United States, or "excessive" government direction of credit; as part of his rampage against this last, Jackson withdrew U.S. government deposits from the Bank of the United States in 1832, bringing about the worst depression in U.S. history, and handing U.S. credit over to the British and their American agents.

Everett played a key role in America's Greek revival, and Harvard University established its new chair of Ancient Greek studies for him, where Emerson was his student. Wills hails Everett "the new Pericles of the western world."

While I am not a Greek scholar, the minute I saw Everett's speech, followed by speeches of Pericles and Gorgias, as Wills's appendices to Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the hoax was obvious. This Transcendentalist Greek revival of "pure mob democracy" was an enemy operation run against

the United States—and against the Whig policy for which Clay and Carey and Lincoln fought.

Lincoln and Gethsemane

If one wants to look at Lincoln's poetical tradition and inspiration, look to his favorites—Burns and Shakespeare—much of whose works he knew by heart. He attended every Shakespeare performance that he could, and remarked that he was especially fond of the political tragedies. He read Shakespeare aloud all the time, commenting often on his use of metaphor. Nonetheless, Wills completely misses what motivated the 272 beautiful words that make up the Gettysburg Address—a speech which took approximately three minutes to deliver—and which will be remembered in history forever.

Great poetry—as the Gettysburg Address certainly is—can only come from a mind and soul which has confronted the question of Gethsemane. Statesman Lyndon LaRouche reflected in his introduction to the autobiography of civil rights veteran Amelia Platts Boynton Robinson, *Bridge Across Jordan* (Washington, D.C.: Schiller Institute, 1991), that few Americans have actually dealt with this question: "Those of us who find ourselves in Gethsemane—a Gethsemane where we are told that we must take a role of leadership with our eye on Christ on the Cross—often experience something which, unfortunately, most people do not."

Garry Wills is not even in a universe in which he can contemplate such a question—the commitment to freedom and human dignity so strong that one is willing to risk one's life to secure them. Lincoln was not mourning the death of his son at Gettysburg. As I discussed in my address to the Sept. 5, 1992 conference of the International Caucus of Labor Committees (see *EIR*, Oct. 2, 1992), Lincoln was a man who, from the day of his inauguration until his assassination, 1,503 days, took upon his shoulders the fate of his nation—and also the world—in a war in which he put 3 million people into uniform; in which almost one-quarter of all men of military age died or were wounded; a war in which he mobilized the greatest economic revival in human history.

After his election, but before his inauguration, Lincoln's close friend Judge Gillespie recounts that Lincoln told him: "I see the duty revolving upon me. I have read, upon my knees, the story of Gethsemane, where the Son of God prayed in vain that the cup of bitterness might pass from him. I am in the Garden of Gethsemane now, and my cup of bitterness is full and overflowing. . . ."

"I then told him that as Christ's prayer was not answered and his crucifixion had redeemed the great part of the world from paganism to Christianity, so the sacrifice demanded of him might be a great beneficence. Little did I then think how prophetic were my words to be, or what a great sacrifice he was called upon to make."

In the crisis our world is facing, let us revive Lincoln—and put an end to the Confederacy once and for all.