

Pamphlet #2

We are not amused

A little more Tabasco Dear!

Confederate States of America

a giant shotgun blast. He was surprised they had bothered to fire at such a lonely target as himself, and even more surprised that he had survived the attack.

When he raised his hand to wipe the grime from his eyes, Zach realized that it was covered with blood. At about that time his shoulder began to throb with pain. He had not survived unscathed.

Still unsure as to what to do, Private Bolton began moving slowly toward where what remained of the 33rd had disappeared over the hill. The Captain who stopped him was unfamiliar, but wore the patches of the 21st Illinois.

"You're wounded. We've done our job here," he assured the private who had stumbled toward him. "Get back before you bleed to death." The captain gave Zach a gentle shove back toward their original position.

Still unsure, the private took the path of least resistance, which was down the slope. Less than halfway to the bottom, he tripped and fell onto something soft and dark. Realizing that he lay against a dead horse, Zach pulled himself to his feet and looked around it. Still straddling the dead black charger was the body of General Lincoln.

It didn't seem right that Lincoln should lie there, all twisted and trapped. Using his good arm, the soldier managed to pull the body out from under the horse. As he propped the dead general up against his saddle, Zach could count three holes in the man's chest.

Not quite understanding the gesture, but feeling it was the right thing to do, Zachary Bolton of the 33rd Illinois rose and stepped back from Lincoln's body, saluting as smartly as he knew how. As he did, he noticed the surprisingly peaceful expression in the great man's eyes.

1872

The very first woman to campaign for the presidency was Victoria Claflin Woodhull, who, in 1872, ran on a platform of free love, women's suffrage, short skirts, legalized prostitution, and the right of women to orgasm. She was arrested and jailed on obscenity charges the day before the election when the magazine she published printed details of the Beecher-Tilton scandal, and she lost, of course, to Ulysses S. Grant.

Laura Resnick, the daughter of your editor and an award-winning author of ten novels in the romance field under the pen-name of Laura Leone, has chosen to write her first science fiction story (she has since written and sold five more) about the reign of President Woodhull and the effect it might have had upon the world at large—and on one particular Englishwoman who is less than amused.

## We Are Not Amused

by Laura Resnick

The following letters have been excerpted from *Correspondence Between the Victorias: An Insight Into the Decline of Victorianism, 1872-1880* by Dr. Wiantha Woodhull. The author is a descendant of President Victoria Woodhull

(1872-1876) and Attorney General Zula Maud Woodhull (1904-1908). The book will be published in its entirety this spring by Femme Fatale Press, cover price \$16.95.

*SANDRINGHAM, 10th December 1872:*

Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, wishes to convey her sincere felicitations to the President Elect of the United States of America, Mrs. Victoria Woodhull. The Queen was very strongly, though not unpleasantly, surprised to learn from Mr. Gladstone that Mrs. Woodhull has succeeded to the highest elected office of her charming country.

The Queen applauds Mrs. Woodhull's commendable and publicly expressed gratitude to Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, who aided and abetted her bold campaign for the presidency. The Queen knows little of Mrs. Woodhull's background, and wonders if the Woodhull and Vanderbilt families have been intimate for many years.

The Queen has learned that Mrs. Woodhull did not rely solely upon Mr. Vanderbilt for financial support for her campaign, but also engaged in active enterprise in partnership with her sister, Miss Tennessee Claflin, first as New York stockbrokers and later as the publishers of *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*. The Queen admires such industrious behaviour and has very often encouraged it in her subjects! The Queen has been informed that a particular issue of *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly* printed two days before the presidential election sold for forty dollars per copy. The Queen is most impressed that Americans are so eager to read, and she would very much like to know more about the contents of the *Weekly*.

Nevertheless, the Queen is well aware that it requires more than mere money to emerge victorious in a political campaign, having observed many such campaigns within her realm. Mrs. Woodhull may be surprised to learn that the Queen knows that, as early as 1870, Mrs. Woodhull enjoyed the support of Congressman Benjamin F. Butler

of Massachusetts, who arranged for her to address the House Judiciary Committee.

It was certainly at this pivotal moment, when Mrs. Woodhull urged Congress to legalize women's suffrage under the Fourteenth Amendment (a speech for which, the Queen understands, the National Woman Suffrage Association delayed the start of their convention in Washington, D.C.), that Mrs. Woodhull's political career became of such interest to the British Prime Minister. The Queen commends Mrs. Woodhull on her successful efforts, since it is surely the woman's vote which has helped to place her so securely in office! The Queen is also sure that Mrs. Woodhull will agree that the Queen's own female subjects currently have all the rights and privileges they need and are in *no need* of suffrage like their distant sisters across the sea.

Although former President Grant cost Her Majesty's Government \$15.5 million in the settlement of the *Alabama* incident (and Mrs. Woodhull may be assured that no one had informed the Queen that the British weren't supposed to sell ships to the Confederates during the American Civil War, much less that there was evidently a precise difference between Confederate rebels and Cuban belligerents, or Cuban rebels and Confederate belligerents), he was evidently nevertheless a rather popular president within his own country (leading the Queen to believe that the American people still harbor some resentment from 1812).

It has been implied within Her Majesty's Government that President Grant may well have won re-election, had not Mr. Greeley and Mr. Sumner been successful in their advocacy of an amendment to limit the president to one term. Perhaps Black Friday and the Santo Domingo affair contributed to the success of this amendment. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that this surprising development, combined with the Republicans' *misguided judgement* in naming an actor as their next presidential candidate, contributed to Mrs. Woodhull's felicitous suc-

cess. The Queen, known for her sense of humour, acknowledges the irony: Mr. Greeley succeeded in eliminating President Grant from the race, but he himself, as the Democratic candidate, suffered an overwhelming defeat at the hands of his female opponent, candidate of the Equal Rights Party!

The Queen has learned that a duck was somehow responsible for Mr. Greeley's defeat. Her Majesty is at a loss to understand how an ordinary farm animal could be instrumental in deciding the outcome of a presidential race, but she recognizes that Americans have lived in isolation for some centuries and may have unique values.

The Queen also wishes to take this opportunity to convey her felicitations to Mr. Frederick Douglass, the abolitionist and former slave who now stands beside Mrs. Woodhull as her Vice President.

The Queen concludes by advising Mrs. Woodhull to seek the advice and guidance of Mr. Woodhull, remembering as she does how greatly she valued and misses the strength and wisdom of her departed husband, Prince Albert.

**BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th April, 1873:**

The Queen has to thank President Woodhull sincerely for her letter of 15th February, and she is pleased to learn that the President felt her inauguration was a successful occasion!

The Queen further thanks President Woodhull for explaining how a duck caused her Democratic opponent to lose the election. The Queen expresses hope that all ducks have been *removed from his presence*, as well as all children and all persons of character.

The Queen finds it most enlightening that President Woodhull's sister Miss Tennessee Claflin initiated their association with the esteemed Vanderbilt family by administering a healing massage to Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt. However, though she *seldom interferes* in the

affairs of foreign nations, the Queen feels bound to suggest that Miss Claflin may not be the best possible choice for the post of Surgeon General, since her medical practices led to her being indicted for manslaughter in Illinois in 1864.

Thanks must also be extended to President Woodhull for the time she took in explaining her *Weekly's* exposure of the Beecher-Tilton incident, though the Queen finds it quite difficult to believe such claims about a clergyman. Apparently the American people also found it difficult. The Queen is pleased to learn that President Woodhull and Miss Claflin have nonetheless been acquitted of obscenity charges.

On the issue of Mr. Woodhull, the Queen is somewhat bewildered, despite the President's explanation. If the Queen understands correctly, President Woodhull is the wife of Colonel James Harvey Blood, *not* the wife of Dr. Canning Woodhull. However, the President's former husband, the aforementioned Dr. Woodhull, now lives in the White House with the President and her husband.

Under the circumstances, the Queen agrees with President Woodhull that it might be wiser to seek advice from *neither man* for the time being.

The Queen is charmed to learn that President Woodhull is the proud mother of two children. From the President's description, the Queen concludes that Zula Maud is a child of remarkable resilience of character. The Queen expresses her sympathy that the President's son, Byron, has been diagnosed as a mental defective. Having recently read *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, the Queen can only conclude that this is often true of men named Byron.

Mr. Gladstone has informed the Queen of President Woodhull's Cabinet appointments. Evidently, Susan B. Anthony will make a vigorous Secretary of the Treasury, as she is now gamely grappling with the financial problems resulting from the American Civil War and Reconstruction; British subjects have already heard of a new

currency called the "Susie Buck." Initiative should always be applauded!

The Queen also commends the President's wise decision to rejuvenate her nation's dealings with the American Indian tribes. They are still living far closer to civilisation than they really need to be, and perhaps the President's newly appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Talks Much Woman, can convince them of this, being one of their own kind.

However, Her Majesty's Government is concerned that the posts of Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy are to be abolished altogether and replaced by the Secretary of Love and the Secretary of Reproductive Freedom. Mr. Gladstone and the Queen would both appreciate a more thorough explanation than offered in the President's previous letter.

The Queen cannot also help wondering if Elizabeth Cady Stanton, though movingly described by the President as a lifelong crusader against immorality, is appropriately qualified for the post of Attorney General.

Finally, the Queen expresses her admiration for President Woodhull's unwavering commitment to Pantarchy, but would like to know what it is.

**BALMORAL, 5th August 1873:**

The Queen thanks President Woodhull for her letter of 4th June, though she found the contents of said letter quite disturbing.

The Queen was aware that President Woodhull had once assumed leadership of Section Twelve of Marx's International Workingmen's Association, but thought it would be in poor taste to remind the President of her youthful indiscretions. Nor did the Queen wish to presume about President Woodhull's character. After all, Mr. Disraeli may be a Liberal, but he is nevertheless a most agreeable person, as the Queen keeps pointing out to Mr. Gladstone.

However, Pantarchy, a supposedly perfect state wherein

children and property are managed in common by the members of society, sounds exactly like something those horrid Communists would propose. The Queen wishes to remind President Woodhull that *free love* and the breakdown of the family are in direct opposition to the values held by the Queen and, therefore, universally held by her subjects.

The Queen is further dismayed to learn that the President's administration is encouraging the legalisation of prostitution. While the Queen cannot prevent the President from this folly, she *can certainly resist* the President's efforts to convince her to become a champion of legalised prostitution. Although the President's appeal to protect the lives and health of fallen women is most eloquent, the Queen assures her that no such problem exists in Great Britain (except possibly among the Irish who, after all, cannot help themselves). The Queen protests the figures quoted in President Woodhull's letter which indicate that Her Majesty's subjects enter brothels more frequently than they enter churches. While this is very possibly true of France, the figures are erroneous when applied to Her Majesty's realm!

The Queen recalls that the President's administration is instituting dietary reform, and she suggests that diet may well be at the very root of the problem. Some hearty roast beef, not to mention tea and clotted cream, might well minimize some of the President's more eccentric impulses!

The Queen understands from the President's letter that the Secretary of Reproductive Freedom will supervise research and legislation regarding abortion and birth control. Though the Queen cannot condone this, she does see how this could be considered necessary if everyone in America is going to start practicing free love, since primogeniture could become *extremely confusing*.

Evidently, the Queen misunderstood the President's purpose in appointing Talks Much Woman as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, as well as her goals in dealing

with the American Indian tribes. Would it be too presumptuous of the Queen to enquire just *how much more* of the United States the President intends to give back to native tribes?

Finally, the Queen regrets to inform President Woodhull that her new American ambassador to the Court of St. James was arrested upon arrival. She was wearing a *short skirt*. A skirt which, the Queen is unhappily obliged to inform the President, exposed a considerable portion of her *limbs*. Mr. Gladstone was in a state of considerable excitement, the poor man.

**WINDSOR CASTLE, 23rd October 1875:**

Despite the Queen's firm resolve to have no further correspondence with President Woodhull after the remarks in her Christmas greeting of 1873, she now finds it necessary to appeal to the President to cease this relentless barrage of change which has *so afflicted* British society since the President's election.

The Prince of Wales has recently abandoned his wife, the Princess Alexandra, having explained to the Queen that he is now practicing free love in the American manner, finding it a charming and thoroughly civilised custom. The Princess objected until the American ambassador explained that free love is also *her* right, and she has since become the constant companion of Lord Tennyson (whose works are now sadly lacking in the fine moral tone for which he was once known).

The Queen's dearly beloved daughters, Princess Beatrice and Princess Louise, now habitually wear the *short skirts* first popularised by the President's select representatives in this country. Thousands upon thousands of young women have followed suit, and many of them have established rebellious musical groups which play Spanish and African instruments.

The Duke of York's eldest son has left home to go live with some of the American Indian tribes now settling in the eastern United States. Young men in Trafalgar Square

are wearing their hair in the style of Mohawk Indians and protesting the Government's involvement in India. They also protest the situation in South Africa, melodically insisting that they shall "overcome" someday, which puzzles the Queen.

Mr. Gladstone's office at 10 Downing Street is daily besieged by women demanding the right to vote, the right to apply for men's jobs and earn men's wages, and the right to receive paid maternity leave from their places of employment. Factories in Britain have come to a standstill as workers strike and demand safe working conditions.

Furthermore, traffic in London has been totally disrupted by a group calling itself the British Union of the Sisters of Mercy and Comfort. The prostitutes of London, having heeded President Woodhull's international call to unionisation, now daily parade around Piccadilly Circus in most indecent attire, refusing to leave the public limelight until the Government recognises and protects their places of employment. No doubt suffering from shock, Parliament has been unusually slow in taking any action whatsoever to stop these women from disturbing the peace.

The Queen has lived in seclusion at Windsor Castle for the past six months, waiting for the situation to improve. Mr. Gladstone has finally admitted that he thinks matters may continue on this downhill course for quite some time, though Great Britain, he assures his supporters, will never see a female Prime Minister!

To add to the Queen's woes, her once dear friend the Empress Augusta came to Windsor Castle for a visit this week. In a devastating blow to the civilised world, not only was the Empress wearing a *short skirt*, she also insisted that she adheres to President Woodhull's theory that every woman is entitled to . . . to . . . orgasm! After a most embarrassing discussion, the Empress made a number of comments about the late Prince Albert that the Queen really could not tolerate.

As abasing and humiliating as it is to admit these prob-

lems to President Woodhull, the Queen writes this letter in the hope that the President will see fit to eliminate her newly proposed medical, legal, and environmental reforms. Surely the President can see that they would be the downfall of civilisation!

The Queen holds President Woodhull entirely responsible for the chaos currently overwhelming Great Britain and now seeping into Europe, the alienation of her sons, the disgrace of her daughters, and the loss of a dear old friend.

In short, President Woodhull, we are not amused.

## 1876

Samuel Tilden actually won the 1876 election, but had it stolen by the supporters of Rutherford B. Hayes, who managed to engineer Hayes's election by a single electoral vote. (There were 20 contested electoral votes. Tilden legitimately owned a minimum of 8, and possibly as many as 13 of them—but all 20 went to Hayes, who officially won by an electoral total of 185 to 184.)

Tappan King, former editor of *Twilight Zone* magazine and co-author of *Down Town*, looks back from a vantage point some 16 years after the election and explores just what might have happened to Tilden had the daughter of Samuel Morse actually accepted the marriage proposal put to her by this 62-year-old lifelong bachelor.

## Patriot's Dream

by Tappan King

Drums? Was it the sound of drums he heard, drawing nearer? Pray God it was not, for drums meant war, and there had been too much of war already.

He was running through a great city of white, polished stone. The walls rose up like canyons, high above his head. Snow piled high on every street corner, and the icy wind whistled through the streets, numbing him with its

# **IDS Alternate Histories ~ Rabbi Yossi Liebowitz**

## ***We Are Not Amused***

by Laura Resnick

- 1. What happened to limit President U.S. Grant to one term?**
- 2. What attitudes did President Woodhull embrace that were consistent with the support of Prostitution?**
- 3. How did her reforms affect England and Queen Victoria's response to her?**
- 4. Compare the Temperance movement of the latter 19<sup>th</sup> century to current social family values championed by the Republican Party?**
- 5. Do you think President Woodhull is a fair portrait of a woman president?**
- 6. Contrast her to Sarah Palin and Hilary Clinton!**
- 7. Describe a similar reaction to American values impinging on another culture in the world in which *they would not be amused!***

## "A Little More Tabasco Dear?" by Yossi Liebowitz

"A little more Tabasco dear?" At the time I thought nothing of her offer and the insistence that went with it. Sure, I must have pleaded with her a dozen times or more, "For God's sake Linda, will ya' stop pushing that damn stuff on me and on my scrambled eggs!" "But you love it," she would say ever so convincingly. It's good for ya!" "Yeh! Yeh! I do love it Linda, but you know that I'll be payin' for it by One O'clock this afternoon. I'll be sick as a dog with heartburn. And you know I have to get myself out to the ball field!" Even so, I gave in as I always did. For some reason, her early upbringing, her enduring and hovering affection for me, her DNA, she kept pouring it on. Literally! Oh how she mothered me about every detail of life! I know I was blaming her for my lack of self-control, but that's what my new wife of four years was there for! Whether in baseball, marriage or life, we are basically little boys in need of a lot of mothering! It was 1949! The war was over and life was good again.

When I met <sup>her</sup> she four years earlier, Linda was, well, she was what you would now call a groupie. There I was, right out of High School, looking fit, boyish and agile. I was feeling fine and ready to take a huge swing at life, baseball life that is. "I'll be in the minors for only one season, two at the most!" So I boasted to myself with the kind of utter certainty that every kid in his earlier twenties manufactures. "Some scout will nab me quick and off I'll go to the big's." This was my unending revelry. "I'm goin' to the big's. I am going to the big's!" Didn't matter, which, but my cocky mind and my youthful, irrepressible spirit knew that it would have to be the Pinstripes, the Yanks, you know, the Bronx Bombers. Any team that boasted more than one name, well that was the one destined for me, Aaron Fitzgerald Balker. \* Yes Aaron Fitzgerald Balker, distant cousins of you know who! Met him but once in Hyannis port. I think it was '47. He wasn't much of a thrill, then! Yes, attractive, but skinny and not particular blessed with... what do they call it now...Gravitas? Things sure did change. But then, I never even shook his hand. Didn't want to or need to. I think I said "Hello," once and he gave me a small nod back, returning to a conversation he had been carrying on with someone named Sorenson, a friend of his it seemed by the way they spoke, laughed and gestured to one other. But I do recall overhearing Sorenson say something about how Jack's war record could land him a seat in Congress. "It's your destiny," his friend seemed to say.

Destiny ~ what a foolish idea that I came to discard along with my dreams! I had thought myself a lucky guy, once! WWII had come and gone. I had been too young for the draft. By one day! Can you believe it? One day! And by the time the big one was dropped on Japan, I was no longer needed. The troops were coming home and I too, was going to come home, to home plate that is. Linda was there on that same August day I was playing for the Clarksdale Cards, a decent minor league ball club. Perhaps that was why when I rounded third I ignored the third base coach and his two arms signaling me to hold up! (There I went blamin' her again!) But I had to impress her just one more time. That night I was planning on popping the question. It was not for nothing that my fellow Cards nicknamed me *Awesome Aaron* only half way into the season.

Jim was the clumsiest right fielder the Johnstown Reds ever had with no arm to speak of. Fast? Yeh, he was fast! *Lightning Jim*, they mockingly called him, could round those bases in no time at all. But all he had were those speedy skinny legs that went with his pathetic throwing arm. But my luck *Lightning Jim* was having an off day, that is to say he could somehow throw the ball that afternoon. With me halfway down to home from third, who would have believed he'd throw a lucky bullet, right on target and into Catcher Lou's mitt. I began my slide, thinkin' "Lou'll never tag me at the angle I'm coming in." It never occurred to me that instead of the traditional home plate block, he'd send his right knee right down on my left ankle with the force of a jackhammer! Strange how I didn't feel the pain at first but I sure heard that unforgettable crunch, that knowing sound which screams out to you "Your life just took a left turn and you're heading into oncoming traffic!" Linda at that moment was to have cried out with adoring delight seeing me score the winning run. Instead she gave forth with a yell that made my ears hurt almost as much as my ankle. From twenty-five yards away I heard her wail, "Oh my God! Oh my God!" And Linda wasn't a particularly religious woman. She screamed on and on. "Oh my God! Oh my God!"

The hospital stay was brief and by medical standards the Doctor's report was even briefer. *The surgically implanted pin might allow the patient to walk with a small limp; the pain in his step might dull with time. With some patience and practice Mr. Bauker might even toss a ball someday.* Might walk! Might feel relief! Might toss a ball! Might! Might!! Might!!! Baseball and I were no longer in the cards, let alone playing in the stadium where the pinstriped boys from the Bronx made the dreams of young men come true.

I moped about for a month or two. There wasn't much to the rehabilitation. There wasn't much left of my ankle to rehabilitate. *Awesome Aaron* had become *Awkward Aaron*. I hobbled about feeling real sorry for myself. But Linda would have none of it. She was determined that I, *Awkward Aaron* not become *Awkward Angry Aaron*. She knew baseball was my life and if I couldn't run the bases, well there could be another way of making it around the bases by finding others to round 'em for me. I was wrong about her. Linda loved me not for the baseball great I was to be, but for the man who loved to dream. Soon after I realized that, a knot appeared in my heart and a ring was on her finger. Maybe my injury was a lucky break?

It took a while, but within the year I earned a fair reputation as a scout. I went hither and yon looking for younger versions of myself who could and would do what the fates failed to have in store for me. For two years, I scouted for one minor league team after another; down in Tennessee with the Elizabethton Twins and then on up to Rochester with the Red Wings. It didn't pay all that much, but I was still in baseball. The sight of the green grass was there, I could hear the noise from the stands and though not on the field I was near enough to see it, feel it, smell it and love it. By the winter of '49, the Senators nabbed me and there I was in the bigs at long last. Not in the way I had planned, but I was in the bigs nevertheless! The Washington Senators! It ran in the family it seemed. Hadn't heard about, let alone seen cousin Jack (John Fitzgerald Kennedy to most of you) for quite a while, but we had this small fate in common. Jack had been in Congress less than a year and he

already had his eye on the seat that would make him the Junior Senator from Massachusetts. In three more years he too, would be with the Senators, the *Congressional Senators* that is to say as I was with the Washington Senators.

By the time the early fifties rolled around, Cousin Jack would be on a winning team. The Democrats had been in power for decades and even with Eisenhower a Republican as their General Manager, the key players on the mound, ("Oh Yeh I know, there they call it 'up on the hill'") were Lyndon, Adlai and my cousin Jack. Now that was some line-up!

But as for me, I know what you're thinking. The Washington Senators! A washed up old team that hadn't made any news since '33! The Senators were a laughing stock since their loss to the Giants that year. Since then, Washington came to be known as "first in war, first in peace, and last in the American League." The only real fame they knew was through Broadway. They were the unhappy inspiration for the musical "Damn Yankees." Linda and I went to see it. Funny how we didn't see it as all that funny!

By the time the mid fifties were upon me, I would help sign a kid named Killibrew. He would be my best find for the Senators. But back in '49 I was new to the Senators and hadn't yet done squat. And so, Bucky Harris, the on and off Manager calls me in. "Aaron," he says "we need pitching. Bad! Last year the guys played .500 ball, but we won't even do that if don't get a new ace! I need a Walt Johnson and I need him now. Now listen to me Aaron, I hear that they love baseball down in Cuba something awful!" "Cuba?" I said with no small amount of doubt in my voice. Cuba? "No comprende and No way Jose! They ain't gonna let any Spanairds play here, not in Washington D.C.!" "Sure they will!" he said waving his hands with an unconvincing gesture. "But," with my frustration building I insist, "You ain't no Branch Rickey and I doubt I'll find any Jackie Robinsoneiro's down in Havana!"

That should have ended the conversation right then and there and with it my story. But, let me tell you some things about Bucky that you may not know. Today he ain't as celebrated as Stengel, Connie Mack or well .... you get the idea. He should've been though. He was the youngest player ever to be made manager at the age of 27. The *boy manager* they called him. Maybe that was why he made a has been gimp like me his "boy scout." And on my honor I did my best for the guy who managed more teams to victory than half of the top ten managers combined. Three times with the Senators, once with the Yanks, a year with the Phillies and for a while with the Tigers as player and manager. I once heard a story about Bucky, how one year when he was with the Phils he really showed his character. It was '43 and for some bird brain reason the management decided to rename the team the Blue Jays. By the following year they thought that name was for the birds and changed it back to the Phils. But not before another change was in the works. They wanted to end Bucky's job and quick. Still, calling the team the Blue Jays, the other canaries on the team went on strike all on account of the boys upstairs sending Bucky flying off to some other team. Bucky was the best team player you could find, even when he was no longer on the team. He settled the boys down using nothing but his charming talk and assuring smile. You know with talk that went, "that's the way it goes, boys! Look at the big picture. You just don't know what's for the best!" And then off he

went acceding to the will of the boys upstairs. Good natured Bucky! Good sport Bucky! Yeh, he was all that and more. People forget that he wasn't half bad either as a second baseman! Back in '24 when the Senators took the crown, it was Bucky that started the rally in the eighth when they were down two runs. Yup, he made it all happen when all seemed lost. He paved the way for Walt Johnson to keep them in the game until 12<sup>th</sup> so they could score the big one to seal the deal.

Some simply called him *Bucky*. Others, with true admiration referred to him as the "boy manager." That was mostly behind his back, of course! For me, he was "never quit eight inning Harris!" Yup, it was no use arguing with Bucky. Once Bucky made up his mind that was all there was to it. So what I could say to Bucky except "Hasta la Vista." And then upping the ante just a little bit I humbly asked with a made up sigh in my voice, "Can I at least take Linda with me to get some sun and a little... well you know recreation." "Sure Aaron," Bucky says with a well placed, sincere slap on my back. "No problem Kid!" And with that I was not so gently guided through the door and out of his office. I whispered under my breath. "Cuba! Jeez! Hot hispanic Cuba!"

It turned out Havana was Goldilocks on the day we arrived. Not too hot! Not too cold! Just right! Linda spent the first morning honing her Spanish skills which, sad to say were "malo malo." (Bad! Bad!) As for me all I knew how to say was a quaint little phrase I once received from a Mexican merchant one dull night in Tijuana; ¿Dónde están las prostitutas? I never used it then and I certainly had no use for that amusement at this point in my life. Linda was there and while her speech was nothing to rave about, her ears worked perfectly. In any event, I had Linda and she was enough for any man.

The first morning with Linda in Havana was like enrolling in a language class. Over breakfast she kept saying over and over again:

Buenos días Señor. ¿Es esto la manera al café? (Is this the way to the café?) And we were already in the hotel café. Buenos días Señor. ¿Es esto la manera al café? Linda's second favorite line to practice was: ¿Camarero! le puede me trae un vidrio de té helado? (Oh Waiter! Can you bring me a glass of ice tea?) This was a bit embarrassing! She kept asking for tea while all the time drinking one cup of coffee after another.

And most important to her by far was this essential inquiry, which she often got *El wrongo*:

Perdóneme. ¿Me puede decir donde el cuarto de las Señoras es?  
(Do you know the way to the ladies' room?)

For some reason it came out ¿Perdóneme! ¿Sabe la manera al cuarto de los hombres? (Pardon me! Do you know the way to the men's room?) Much to the amusement of the waiters!

You can imagine how reluctant I was to bring her to the practice field later that day. One slip of the tongue and Cuban American relations would have been strained forever. Eleven years later as you will no doubt recall it wouldn't have mattered one single bit. You can drive yourself crazy with "What if's." My leg hurt especially badly that morning. Yeh, right! *The pain in his step might dull with time.* What if I had held up at third? What if I hadn't see Linda in the stands that day years ago?

After Breakfast, Linda and I had.... well.... a little recreation. Amazing how you can ignore the pain when you have to rise to the occasion! Sitting up in bed, I glanced at the clock. 10:40 Damn! Practice was scheduled for eleven! And after that, their siesta was only two hours away. I never thought much of Cuban players. Certainly not then and certainly not now! Take Minnie Mendoza (Cristobal Rigoberto Mendoza Carreras) whom they nicknamed "The Cuban comet!" Oh boy! Tell me another one! Mendoza may have been a lot of things. But "the Cuban comet's" ball playing was never out of this world! His lifetime batting average was, now get this a pitiful .188. To this day they call a .200 hitter "The Mendoza line!" Thanks to George Brett! (I know some of you think it referred to that Mexican ball player Mario Mendoza!) Either way, what a way to be immortalized! Ok but Bucky thought there was baseball gold in dem dar Hispanic Cuban hills and so off I went diggin' away!" If there were any gold to be found it would have to be found on the mound, with guys like Mike Cuellar, one time Cy Young award winner. To this day, my fellow scouts see it differently! But Ok, they're entitled to their wrong opinion. "Hey, What about the Cansenco brothers?" they say. "What about Ozzie and his twin Jose, the 'Chemist'." With them "It's always Cansenco this and Cansenco that. "But they hadn't made it to the bigs until years later," I argue back. "Not until years later!" I say. This was still 1949!

The ballpark was a bit far from the hotel. What it lacked in proximity, it made up for in paucity. The grass, though richly green, was cut unevenly. The stands, such as they were, had been old, rotting and warped. And these were their best features. I was to say the least, a little anxious about setting myself down and getting a splinter in my rear echelons. Some of the Cuban players had partial uniforms, a few of which were torn and others just mismatched. Their athletic shoes were an unhappy assortment of boots and sneakers with the occasional baseball cleats making a rare appearance. Some of the scouts smirked, but I looked beyond their poverty and saw in their faces an abiding love of the game. These kids came there to play, not to star in some fashion show. It reminded me of... Well.... it reminded me of ... me!

Most of the scouts were there for the same reason I was there. They were ordered down to Havana. Some showed their indifference by sitting in the stands reading a paper, smoking a Cuban cigar or making eyes at the girls who hung about wanting to meet some rich Americanos. I must admit I shared their lack of enthusiasm. When an English newspaper flew out of a chair and on to my feet I picked it up. It had some news, most of it political. The new tensions with the Russkies and an amazing story about some guy a year or so before who broke something called the sound barrier. Sounded a little like Buck Rogers to me. But then again, the Germans had launched their nasty buzz bombs over London, V-2's they were called; at least so I heard. And there on the third page was a little article about new congressmen, cousin Jack included. There wasn't much more in the paper to read and so I set it down just as a new pitcher came to the mound. He started tossing that ball around and unlike the other throwers; his tosses were rarely greeted with a crack of the bat. This kid's specialty was a wicked, inside fastball. Quick windup! Quicker delivery. In a few minutes, me and the other half dozen or so scouts started to take real notice. One of them was a scout for the

Pirates named Leary. Oh Leary again! Like his name, so I was for he really intimidated me. "Scary Leary," I called him. Not to his face of course. He was twice my age and had three times the experience. We had crossed financial swords before. Once in Oklahoma and three times in Missouri we went at it. In getting new prospects, I batted against him a mere .250. At least, I crossed the Mendoza line.

He was always quick with a contract in hand, elbowing his way in to any deal, delivering on almost every prospect. Just one year later I was just a word or two away from signing some Polish Kid named Skowron, "the moose" they called him. Why the "Moose?" you ask. It seems he had this mean look and a short hair cut that reminded the guys of Mussolini. You know the Italian Dictator? Mercifully, the Yanks shortened it to Moose by the time he played in the house that Ruth built. One year before we were Havana, Leary jumps in and whisks him away with one charming single verbal stroke; "Hey kid, what d'ya think 'bout the Yanks?"

And so, not surprisingly, as soon as the inning ends Leary makes a b-line for the dugout and corners the Cuban kid. For a while I stayed off to the side, waited and watched. Maybe, if the moment presented itself, I could out-Leary Leary with a single sentence! When the kid starts turning away from Leary, I knew that moment had arrived. Years later the Cuban kid would boast how he turned down that "filthy capitalist's offer of five grand." I didn't believe it then and I don't believe it now. But, I did believe that the kid loved the game and with just enough persuasion I could make him an offer he would nibble at. I would promise him the world as well as a brief time in the minors before the Senators would put him into their rotation. His English wasn't all that good, but with enough translators around I made my interests known to him. In speaking to me the kid sounded more like a politician than a ballplayer. He spoke as much with words as with his hand gestures. Looking like a grubby, third world version of the Pope, he bobbed his hands up and down. He kept referring to his studies at the University of Havana and how it and the betterment of his nation Cuba came before anything else. As we bantered back and forth, *Scary Leary* grew weary and he eventually sauntered off, not to return. This fish was not going to be reeled in so easily. And that day, Leary was in no mood to go fishing. But I stuck with it and got the Cuban kid to agree to meet with me after the next day's practice.

That was years ago! I think about what happened that next day over and over again, the day I never caught up with that Cuban kid. I think about how I returned to Washington and to Bucky empty handed. The fifties flew by and cousin Jack's career soared, unlike the Senators who finally gave up and moved on to Minneapolis, becoming the Twins. I went with them. But for cousin Jack, it was two quick terms in the Senate with a near grab on to the national ticket in '56 with Adlai as the Democratic nominee again. When Jack was elected four years later in that squeaker of an election, I rejoiced and regretted more than ever my earlier reluctance to connect with him in Hyannis Port. Never got invited to one of the inaugural balls. Once, we were in the same ballpark for opening day. I saw by the way he threw the ceremonial first pitch he wasn't quite the athlete we were led to believe. Was Jack hiding something from us? Maybe his war wounds were worse than advertised or perhaps it was something else I wondered? I knew injuries and

what they could do to a man. Linda agreed something was amiss, something you would not ordinarily suspect. She had a sense about things. Only years later when we learned about his Addison's disease I came to fully realize how perceptive my Linda really was.

But I followed Cousin Jack and his dreams, dreams for peace, dreams for the stars. I also knew something of dreaming. And about nightmares that ended them well before their time. Cousin Jack's dreams ended in Dallas on November 22, 1963. It all went down hill after that ~ Viet Nam never got settled politically as he promised it would be. Then Bobby was killed. Martin had been too! Rioting in the streets as the war dragged on and on! Nixon's near impeachment and the resignation followed. The seventies and eighties were a mess with inflation, crime and homelessness. Anger and confusion followed! And now the things they say about Cousin Jack and his dalliances. I don't even want to think about the kids from Hyannis Port who were left behind, shaken and wounded. A lot of strikeouts and far too many unfinished games!

No one is certain by whom, or when or why he was taken. But I know baseball and baseball is not unlike life. It is life. Having been part of the game for years, I knew about sacrifices and who could strategize and where and when. Who to put into the game! And who to take out of the game! Who the hell took Cousin Jack out of the game? The Mafia? The CIA? If you ask me they were all involved in one way or another. Does it really matter who was up at bat on November 22? Still, I keep going back to Cuba. My bet was and remains on the Cubans, outnumbered and isolated on their little island. Cuba! Hot Hispanic Cuba! After the Bay of Pigs, the CIA would simply not let go. They tried and tried to chop off the leader's head so the revolutionary body would die. "Poison his 'Moros y Cristianos' (black beans and rice). Use exploding cigars! *Femme Fatales*. Get a sniper in there to take him out already. Do it, just go in and do it!" How the hell did he ever survive all their efforts? Was it destiny? After all of the CIA failed shenanigans, Jack said he wanted to "splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces and scatter it into the winds." ("CIA: Maker of Policy, or Tool?" *New York Times*. April 25, 1966. Page 20 Column 3.)

I wonder from time to time: If only cousin Jack had not fired CIA director Allen Dulles? If only, he hadn't ordered the failed Bay of Pigs in the first place! If only that hadn't so angered Lee Harvey Oswald, which led him to join the *Fair play for Cuba!* If only? What if? You can drive yourself crazy with "If only's" and "What if's." What if I had held up at third? What if I hadn't seen Linda in the stands that day, trying to make my way to home plate just to impress her? What if Catcher Lou had simply blocked that plate or if *Lighting Jim* had been his usual awful throwing self? Why did I have to try that different kind of slide? What if my parents had made love just one night before, would I have become draft bait and never even lived to play any baseball? What if I had just let Leary alone so he could talk a little more to the Cuban kid? What if Bucky had never sent me down to Cuba that day? Oh, You can drive yourself crazy with "What if's." And then of course there is one more "what if?" that aches me deep inside.

"A little more Tabasco dear?" At the time I thought nothing of her offer and the insistence that went with it. Sure, I must have pleaded with her a dozen times or more, "For God's sake Linda, will ya' stop pushing that damn stuff on me and on

my scrambled eggs!" "But you love it," she would say ever so convincingly. It's good for ya!" "Yeh! Yeh! I do love it Linda, but you know that I'll be payin' for it by One O'clock this afternoon. And you know I have to get out to the ball field!" I got to meet this kid and seal the deal." "What kid?" Linda asked. "A new pitcher for the Senators! Bucky will love 'em. Just what he needs! A new Walt Johnson, his buddy from '24! "A little more Tabasco dear?" Linda says once more. As usual and at last, I gave in. She poured away! *Pour favor!* I joked to myself that morning in Cuba. And by One O'clock I was sick as a dog with heartburn. Off I went to their outhouse. By the time I was cleaned up and had returned to the field he was gone. I never saw him again, at least not in person. "What kid?" Linda asked back then. "You mean his name?" I said? "Well Leary told me his name was Fidel. Fidel.... Castro I think! What a pitcher! He'll make all the difference for Washington!" That's what I said to Linda before I headed out to the ballpark, not knowing that the heartburn that was coming would last for decades. Oh Cousin Jack! Oh my dear lost Cousin Jack! Whether in baseball, marriage or life, we are basically little boys in need of a lot of mothering! But not always! It was 1949! The war was over and life was good again.

#### **Balk actions**

A pitcher is restricted to a certain set of motions and one of two basic pitching positions before and during a pitch; if these regulations are violated with one or more runners on base, an umpire may call a balk.

- With a runner on base and the pitcher on or astride (with one leg on each side of) the rubber, it is a balk when the pitcher:
  - switches his pitching position from the windup to the set (or vice versa) without properly disengaging the rubber;
  - while on the rubber, makes a motion associated with his pitch and does not complete the delivery;
  - when pitching from the set position, fails to make a complete stop with his hands together before beginning to pitch;
  - throws from the mound to a base without stepping toward (gaining distance in the direction of) that base;
  - throws or feints a throw from the rubber to an unoccupied base, unless a play is imminent;
  - steps or feints from the rubber to first base without completing the throw (doing so to second or third base is legal);
  - delivers a quick return, a pitch thrown right after receiving the ball back, with intent to catch the batter off-guard;
  - drops the ball while on the rubber, even if by accident, if the ball does not subsequently cross a foul line;
  - while intentionally walking a batter, releases a pitch while the catcher is out of his box with one or both feet
  - unnecessarily delays the game
  - itches while facing away from the batter;
  - after bringing his hands together on the rubber, separates them except in making a pitch or a throw;
  - stands on or astride the rubber without the ball, or mimics a pitch without the ball; or
  - throws to first when the first baseman, because of his distance from the base, is unable to make a play on the runner there.
- The pitcher's acts of spitting on the ball, defacing or altering the ball, rubbing the ball on the clothing or body, or applying a foreign substance to the ball are not balks, however it will result in the pitcher's ejection from the game if caught.

### **Questions: "A Little More Tabasco Dear?"**

- 1. How does Aaron's attitude towards his wife Linda change throughout the narrative?**
- 2. In what ways do Aaron's reflections on his life's trajectories mirror or contrast with that of Cousin Jack?**
- 3. How does the use of nicknames push the story along?**
- 4. In the end what is the ultimate cause of JFK's assassination? Is it limited to a single event?**
- 5. How does the story assert or refute the notion that there is inevitability to events?**
- 6. What does the story suggest about good things leading to bad results and bad things leading to good results?**
- 7. If you could learn more about the characters, whom would you choose?**
- 8. Which character did you like the most? The least?**
- 9. What emotions did the story elicit in you personally?**
- 10. If you could re-write one aspect the tale what would it be?**

ever, the kingdom's resources need to be concentrated at home, to bring the long war against the heathen Moors of Granada to a successful conclusion. At such a crucial time, we should waste no money on a program whose returns, if any, will not be manifest for some decades.

If funds must be committed to the sea program, they should be earmarked for national defense goals in the Mediterranean Sea, not spent on wild-eyed jaunts into the trackless and turbulent Atlantic. Until and unless we succeed in overcoming the corsair gap now existing, our southern coast will remain vulnerable to attacks from Algeria and Morocco even after the Moors of Granada are brought under our control. Moreover, if we fail to move against the heathen states of Africa, they shall surely fall under the aegis of the expansionist Ottoman sultanate, with potential profound consequences to the balance of power in the area, as strong infidel forces will then be enabled to strike at our routes to our Italian possessions.

It may be argued that shipbuilding will aid the economy of those areas near ports. This view is superficial and shortsighted. True, jobs may be provided for lumberjacks, carpenters, sailmakers, etc., but at what cost to the world in which they live? Barring reforestation projects, for which funding does not appear to be forthcoming, any extensive shipbuilding venture will inevitably result in the denuding of significant areas of the kingdom and the deformation of the long-established ecological patterns of the wildlife therein. In any case it is questionable whether shipbuilding represents the ideal utilization of our limited timber resources. The quantity of wood required to construct an oceangoing vessel could better be employed to provide low-income housing for whole villages of peasants, or to furnish even larger numbers of underprivileged citizens with firewood sufficient for an entire fiscal year.

Further, especially for long voyages such as that urged by Colón, ships must carry extensive stores (this point will again be alluded to later in the report). The question must be posed as to whether our agricultural industry is adequate even to care for the current needs of the population of Spain itself. Surely an affirmative answer to this question, such as cannot with assurance be given at present, is necessary before expansion can be contemplated and resources diverted for it. We must put a halt to these environmentally disadvantageous programs before they become so ingrained in our lifestyle that their removal presents difficulty.

There is yet another factor to be considered, one closely related to that referred to in the previous sentence. Even if Colón precisely fulfills his expectations, what will the consequences of this "success" be for

*H. v. g. T. K. d. o. l.*

# Report of the Special Committee

30 November 1491

To: Their Hispanic Majesties Fernando II and Isabella  
From: The Special Committee on the Quality of Life  
Re: The environmental impact upon Spain of the proposed expedition of the Genoese navigator Cristóbal Colón, styled in his native Italian Cristoforo Colombo

The commission of learned men and mariners, established by Your Majesties under the chairmanship of Fr. Hernando de Talavera, during the period 1486-90 studied exhaustively the proposals set forth by the Genoese captain Colón and rejected them as being extravagant and impractical. In the present year a second commission, headed by the Grand Cardinal, Pedro González de Mendoza, has also seen fit to decline the services of Colón. The present Special Committee on the Quality of Life finds itself in complete accord with the actions of the previous two bodies of inquiry. It is our unanimous conclusion that the rash scheme advocated by this visionary would, if implemented, do serious damage to the finances and ecology of Spain; that this damage, if permitted, would set a precedent for future, more serious outrages of our environment; and, most important, that the proposed voyage would expose any sailors engaged thereon to unacceptable risk of permanent bodily illness and injury and even death.

Certain people may perhaps suggest that the sea program of this kingdom is essential to its future growth. To this uninformed view we may only offer our wholehearted opposition. The Atlantic sea program demands extremely high expenses and hazards in both men and matériel, for gains at best speculative but more likely nonexistent. Now more than

Spain? Many substances about which we know little, and which may well prove hazardous, will begin to enter the kingdom in large quantities, and control over their sale and distribution will be difficult to achieve. We run a substantial risk of seeing the nation filled with addicts to toxins now unknown. Nor is it possible to discount the dangers of ideological contamination, which is as much to be feared as is the physical. It is doubtful whether the inhabitants of the distant lands the Genoan plans to visit share our religious and cultural benefits. Yet it is also probable that certain of their number may settle on our soil and attempt to disseminate their inadequate but perhaps seductive doctrines among our populace. As we are now on the point of expelling the Jews from our state and have nearly overcome the Muslim Moors, why should we hazard the homogeneity we have at last achieved after almost eight centuries of sustained effort?

The sudden influx of new goods will also disrupt our traditional economic organization. There can be no doubt that there will be an increase in the monetary supply because of the profit made by reselling Eastern goods throughout Europe, but can a corresponding increase in the volume of goods and services be predicted? If the answer to this question is in the negative, as all current economic indicators would imply, then the "success" of Colón would seem to bring with it a concomitant inflationary pressure that would tend to eat into the profits derived from that success and would make life more difficult and expensive for the average Spaniard. Also, any substantial increase in the sea program would force the diversion of labor from its traditional concern to maritime activities. Such a shift could not help but further disjoint our economy, and cannot be anticipated with anything but trepidation. The dislocation could even be so severe as to cause emigration to the Eastern lands, which would of course entail a draining of the best of the kingdom's populace from its shores.

Finally, if the government of Spain is to approve, fund, and provide manpower for the Colón expedition, it must have some assurance that it is not dangerously imperiling the health and future well-being of the members of that expedition. The dangers of the seaman's trade are notorious and he performs his labors on a nutritionally inadequate diet of what can only be described as "junk food": hardtack, salt meat, and dried peas, with perhaps a bit of cheese. This regimen is manifestly unhealthful, and Colón and the men under his charge would be unable to supplement it except through fishing. They would not enjoy the advantage, as do sailors of the Mediterranean Sea and also the Portuguese in their journeys down the coast of Africa, of replenishing their supplies at relatively brief intervals, but would be compelled to make do

once having departed the Canary Islands. Nor is the situation in regard to potables much better, these being restricted to casked water and wine. The probability is extremely high that at least some of the former will go bad; the latter faces not only this danger, but, if drunk to excess, has the potential of severely compromising the efficiency of ship's operations and thereby reducing an already low margin of safety. Ships are designed so that only the captain enjoys the luxury of a cabin with a bunk, and even this private space is scarcely more than might be found in a closet ashore. Sailors and underofficers are compelled to sleep wherever they are able to find room, in the same clothing they have worn during the day. Thus the life-support systems of any Atlantic sea expeditionary force at the current level of technology must be deemed inadequate.

Navigational instruments are also crude in the extreme. Quadrant and astrolabe are so cumbersome, and so likely to be grossly impacted by ship's motion, as to be little more useful than dead reckoning in the determination of latitude; dead reckoning alone serves in estimating longitude. For a voyage of the length anticipated by Colón, these factors, in combination with the stormy nature of the Atlantic and the likelihood of meeting unanticipated hazards with no support facilities upon which to fall back, give the Genoan's proposals a degree of risk so high that no merciful sovereign could in good conscience allow his subjects to endanger themselves in the pursuit thereof.

Therefore, it is the determination of the Special Committee on the Quality of Life, appointed by Your Hispanic Majesties as per the environmental protection regulations of the realm, that the proposals of Colón do in the several ways outlined above comprise a clear and present danger to the quality and security of life within the kingdom, and that they should for that reason be rejected once more. Respectfully in triplicate submitted by

*Jaime Nosénada*

*Chairman of the Special Committee on the Quality of Life*

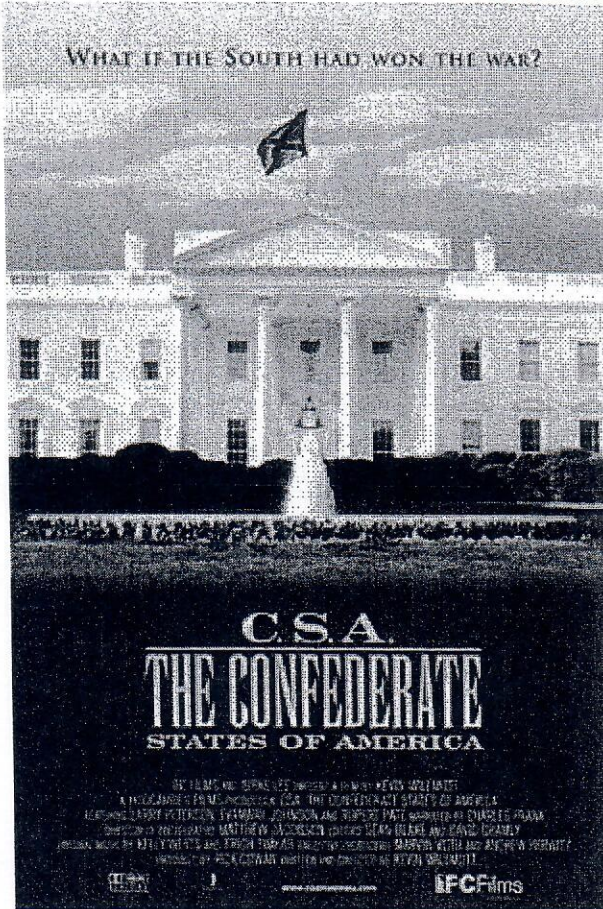
# **IDS Alternate Histories ~ Rabbi Yossi Liebowitz**

## ***Report of the Special Committee***

by Harry Turtledove

- 1. What religious tensions are referenced in the story?**
- 2. What economic impediments are addressed in the report?**
- 3. What future economic consequences does the report address?**
- 4. What technological and social concerns are addressed that make for a difficult journey?**
- 5. How does this story relate to the earlier and current ambitions of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration?**

## CSA: CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA



### A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR ABOUT THE PRODUCTION.

The idea for the film came from watching Ken Burns's *The Civil War* on PBS. In one of the segments, Burns details the South's plan, had they won. They were to build a "tropical empire" and expand further south into Mexico and South America. Evidence of this actual plan is the city of "Americana" in Brazil that was founded by former Confederates.

Often, when I would submit scripts to Hollywood that in some way dealt with slavery or the issue of race in a historical context, they would tell me that slavery is not "commercial" and that no one is interested in this side of American life. My former agent would mention *Amistad* and *Beloved*, both financial failures (in Hollywood terms) as examples that prove slavery is a subject that is a downer for blacks and a guilt trip for whites. Yet, *Gone with the Wind* is always placed at the top of the "greatest films of all time" lists. I would agree with syndicated columnist Leonard Pitts, who wrote, "*Gone with the Wind* is a romance set in Auschwitz." Is the film popular because all the slaves film are happy and impervious from complicating the romance and struggle of the white characters?

We all know Ken Burns, a man brilliant in his knowledge of how lucrative the Civil War industry is, and his documentary mini-series. The success of the Burns series is undisputable evidence that an interest in the civil war exists. "*Cold Mountain*" and many

other films have offered a certain take on the War. So often, these productions have an antiseptic quality that simply doesn't explore real issues, but rather romance and battlefield memory.

I started to think how I could approach the subject in a new way. How could you make slavery and the reality of the Confederacy fresh in the minds of an audience? That is where the idea germinated.

I researched the subject, making choices that ground the film in a reality not based in speculative history, as much as in a series of "sign posts" that reflects our actual history.

And because the choices come from our real history, we are not making light of the cruelty of slavery. The humor comes from the absurdity of our real lives, not from jokes.

I was fortunate to have Rick Cowen, who produced my first film *Ninth Street*, once again on board as producer. Our first shot was in February, 2000, thanks in large part to an initial grant from the National Black Programming Consortium and financing via our Executive Producer Marvin Voth.

The University of Kansas, where I teach film, was also enormously helpful. In addition to the gracious use of the Oldfather Studios soundstage and editing facilities, I was able to rope in fellow professor Matthew Jacobson, an expert cinematographer.

Except for a few shots in Georgia, *CSA* was entirely filmed in Lawrence, Kansas and the Kansas City metro area. Casting and sound advice was provided by Jack Wright and Heather Laird of Wright Laird Casting.

In many ways, the South did win The Civil War. Maybe not on the battlefield, but they won the peace. They won the fight for their way of life. The North changed, not the South. One of the best examples is the city, in which I live, Lawrence, Kansas, famously founded by abolitionists. Following the North's "victory," the city was segregated.

Kansas University, where I am an Assistant Professor, was segregated. The *Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that desegregated schools in the United States was in Kansas, not Mississippi. Maybe the history of the "C.S.A." would not be all that different from the one we have known - some differences, perhaps, but not a complete counter history.

I hope that audiences find the film a provocative and entertaining look at slavery, race and the American way of life.

Kevin Willmott  
January, 2004

## Overview

The movie is presented as if it were a British documentary being broadcast on Confederate network television, even including fictional commercials between segments of the documentary. It opens with a (fictional) disclaimer that suggests that censorship came close to preventing the broadcast, that its point of view might not coincide with that

of the TV network, and that it might not be suitable for viewing by children and "servants". It purports to disagree with the orthodox Confederate American interpretation of United States history

It portrays two historians, Sherman Hoyle, a conservative Confederate States of America (CSA) white man, and Patricia Johnson, an African Canadian, as "talking heads," providing commentary. Throughout the documentary, a Confederate politician and Democratic presidential candidate, John Ambrose Fauntroy V (the great-grandson of one of the men who helped to create the CSA), is interviewed. Narration explains faux historical newsreel footage, which is either acted for the production, or made of genuine footage with fictional, dubbed narration.

Racist ads aimed at white slave-owning families appear throughout the movie, including an electronic shackle for tracking runaway slaves, a *Runaway* television program (satirizing *COPS*), Darkie Toothpaste, Gold dust washing powder, Niggerhair cigarette, and the Coon Chicken Inn. Additional commercials were produced but deleted from the final cut, including ads for the Confederate States Air Force and the children's show *Uncle Tom and Friends*. The sitcom *Beulah* is portrayed as *Leave It to Beulah*. At the film's end, titles note that parts of the fictional CSA timeline are based on real-life history, and that some of the advertised products did exist.

## **Alternate timeline**

### **American Civil War**

In the fictional timeline, politician Judah P. Benjamin persuades the United Kingdom and France to aid the Confederacy so that it wins the Battle of Gettysburg. A fictional D. W. Griffith silent film shows Harriet Tubman helping Union President Abraham Lincoln (disguised in blackface) try to escape to Canada after the CSA's military defeat of the Union. Confederate soldiers capture them; Tubman is put to death and Lincoln imprisoned. After two years, Lincoln is pardoned and exiled to Canada, where he dies in June 1905 at age 96. Before dying, Lincoln laments not having made the Civil War a battle to end slavery. In the aftermath, the conflict is known by the CSA as the War of Northern Aggression.

### **Post-war expansionism**

After the war, the South tries to induce the North to accept the institution of slavery. John Ambrose Fauntroy I introduces a tax that is alleviated by the purchase of slaves, and the works of Samuel A. Cartwright dominate American medical science. The CSA becomes the Western hemisphere's superpower — conquering and occupying all of the continental US, Mexico, Central America, and South America, with a blend of segregation and apartheid. Only Canada is not a CSA "client state", becoming home to refugee abolitionists and escaped black slaves. The Confederates construct a wall along the border between the two countries called the "Cotton Curtain" (referencing the Iron Curtain). Hatred of "Red Canada" dates to the late 19th century, when Frederick Douglass convinces the Canadian Parliament not to repatriate escaped slaves. Canada

becomes the popular culture capital of the world with the contributions of African Americans and other exiles (Elvis Presley, after being jailed for a time, flees there), whereas the CSA never evolves beyond heavy-handed government propaganda.

In 1895, the Confederate government, which does not separate the Church from the State, outlaws all non-Christian religions. After much debate, the Roman Catholic Church is classified as a Christian religion. Originally, Judaism, too, is outlawed, but after a dying Jefferson Davis cites the crucial contribution of the Jewish Judah P. Benjamin, the government decides to allow some American Jews to remain on a reservation (similar to a Native American reservation) in Long Island.

## World War II

During World War II, the CSA is friendly with Nazi Germany, but disagrees with Adolf Hitler's Final Solution — the CSA preferring to exploit non-white races instead of exterminating them. The CSA agrees to remain neutral in any German war. Instead, the CSA preemptively attacks the Empire of Japan on December 7, 1941 (the date of the actual attack on Pearl Harbor), as the opening blow in a war against the "Yellow Peril". The CSA military recruits a black regiment by promising the black soldiers their freedom if they would fight (which is later revealed to be a lie). The war is won using the atomic bomb. However, the European war still ends in German defeat, albeit with many more Soviet casualties. After the war, the Summit Nations impose trade sanctions and embargoes on the CSA, forcing the nation into isolation. South Africa becomes the only country maintaining diplomatic relations with the CSA.

## Cold war with Canada

During the 1950s, a series of abolitionist attacks cause some Confederate Americans to question the need for slavery. In 1960, when only 29 percent of voters approve of slavery, Roman Catholic Republican John F. Kennedy is elected CSA president over Democrat Richard Nixon. However, foreign policy such as the Newfoundland Missile Crisis distracts him, and he is unable to implement his domestic agenda before being assassinated. The Vietnam War is briefly mentioned as an "expansionist campaign" of the CSA. Slaves rebel throughout the country, including the Watts Riots. Democratic Senator John Ambrose Fauntroy V presents programs returning America to its former Southern Protestant Biblical values — tolerance of adultery and of husbands beating their wives, and intolerance of homosexuals. By the early 1990s, the Confederacy has largely put away such self-doubt.

## Modern day

The documentarians ask Senator (and presidential candidate) Fauntroy V to arrange an interview with some slaves, but it becomes clear that the slaves have been coached. However, they are clandestinely passed a note instructing them to meet a black man named Big Sam (earlier identified as the fugitive leader of a radical splinter group of the "National Association for the Advancement of Chattel People"). Big Sam, in turn, leads them to Horace, a lifelong slave of Fauntroy's, who alleges Fauntroy V is part black, sharing a common slave ancestor. The racial accusations cost Fauntroy V the presidential

election; a month later, the senator commits suicide on December 12, 2002. Narration then states DNA tests were "negative."

### **Expanded timeline**

The film's official website contains an expanded timeline of the history of the CSA, which features events not covered in the mockumentary. The timeline identifies President William McKinley's assassin as an abolitionist rather than an anarchist. The CSA manages to advance in space technology by smuggling 244 Nazi scientists out of Germany before its fall to the Soviet Union. Rosa Parks is identified as a Canadian terrorist and a member of the Black Panther Party. The failed assassination attempt of Pope John Paul II occurs in New York City instead of St. Peter's Square, with the assailant being a Southern Baptist who is subsequently executed for the crime. The Gulf War has Kuwait as CSA territory. In 1995, Timothy McVeigh blows up the Jefferson Memorial instead of Oklahoma City; his execution is broadcast on pay-per-view. The War in Afghanistan and subsequent American interventions in the Middle East are known as the 1st and 2nd Crusades, with the goal of eradicating the "Muslim Menace" by overthrowing the Islamic governments, taking over their oil production and converting their populace to Christianity.

1. How does the film portray southerners and how does that reflect on current culture?
2. How does the film change the timeline in American foreign policy?
3. What parts of our current politics and social system is the film making allusions and in some instances criticisms?
4. Which parts did you find fair and which unfair in their presentation? What more would you have liked to see? What would you have liked to see less?