

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AT 200

What Americans Need To Know About Our Greatest President

This discussion took place on The LaRouche Show, on Feb. 14, 2009, in commemoration of President Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday, Feb. 12, 1809. As the discussion will show, reflecting on Lincoln's Presidency is vital for establishing the standard of leadership required today. The host was Harley Schlanger, who interviewed historian Anton Chaitkin, West Coast LaRouche PAC leader Philip Rubinstein, and LaRouche Youth Movement leader Michelle Lerner. The Internet radio program airs every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time at www.larouchepub.com.

Schlanger: In his most recent webcast, delivered on Feb. 11, Lyndon LaRouche gave an example, a personal example, of the quality of leadership required for these dangerous times. His presentation, which is archived on www.larouchepac.com, provided the new Obama Administration, both the background to the present existential crisis, and the programmatic solution required to solve it.

The Obama Administration is now facing serious decisions in the weeks ahead. The financial crisis was not solved by the Geithner plan, nor by the stimulus package. In fact, the financial crisis is worsening dramatically, and will continue to do so, until the President adopts Lyndon LaRouche's proposal for placing the whole banking system into bankruptcy reorganiza-

tion, while initiating a massive investment of government credit in high-end technologies for infrastructure, such as high-speed rail and nuclear power plants.

The day after LaRouche's webcast, Feb. 12, was the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln, who, along with George Washington and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is on the short list of great Presidents. President Obama, who, like Lincoln, is from Illinois, has expressed his great admiration for Lincoln. But how much does he really know about Abraham Lincoln, who saved the United States from an all-out offensive from the British Empire, to destroy our national sovereignty, by breaking up the Union?

On today's program, we will provide President Obama, and, of course, all our listeners, with the essential background on why President Lincoln was successful. What did he know about the great enemy of our nation—the Anglo-Dutch empire—that President Obama needs to know today, to successfully steer our nation from otherwise certain destruction?

Our panel today consists of three people who have done extensive research on Lincoln. I'll be joined by Anton Chaitkin, an historian from Leesburg, Va.; Phil Rubinstein from Los Angeles; and LaRouche Youth Movement leader Michelle Lerner, from Washington, D.C. So, I'd like to welcome all of you to the program.

I'd like to begin with a synopsis from each of you, of your thoughts on why Abraham Lincoln is justly considered one of our greatest, if not *the* greatest President. Tony, why don't we begin with you.

Lincoln's Vision of America

Chaitkin: When Lincoln was President, in July 1861, he asked Congress to appropriate an unimaginably large amount of money for military spending, to save the Union, and to put the equivalent of what, today, would be 5 million troops, into the field. He said: "This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union, it is a struggle for maintaining in the world, that form and substance of government, whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men."

This idea, that the United States had a mission to physically improve the world, and to radically change and upgrade the conditions of our citizens, stemmed, in Lincoln's mind, from his own adoption, as a young man, in Illinois, of the passion for improvement that he saw in the U.S. government, back in the 1820s.

The image you should have in your mind is Benjamin Franklin, with his electrical experiments, his spreading of the idea, from America, that science and the conquest of nature could be used to transform man's condition.

Lincoln already, in Illinois, built railroads and canals that spectacularly changed the set-up of the country, with the startup of Chicago, before he ever came into the White House. Lincoln knew deeply, as one of a handful of Americans throughout our history, the nature of the enemy, as an imperial, European-based, oligarchy. And their system extended from Europe, into our country, coexisting against our system, with our Constitution; this took the form of slavery, the form of usury in New York, and so forth. And that that system, the international colonial system, had to be overcome, with



Library of Congress

For Abraham Lincoln, the core mission of the Union fight was "maintaining in the world, that form and substance of government, whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men."

its degrading of man into backwardness.

To give you the best picture, to sum this up: In the London *Economist* last week, they had a cover showing a fist, or a hand coming up out of the grave, and it was labelled, "Economic nationalism."

This was their specter, haunting the world. They're hoping, in the City of London, that what Lincoln stood for—what he did to surprise everybody as President, taking a broken Union, in a free-trade period, and turning it into a massive industrialization of the U.S.A.

and the world, making an irreversible change, with steel mills and electricity as the outcome—that the world can never go back to what Lincoln did with government measures to forcibly industrialize. They say we've got to stop that, we can't let that ever come back.

Our job, of course, is to bring it back now.

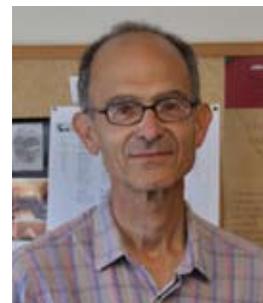
A Deep Philosophical Thinker

Schlanger: Okay. That's a very interesting and useful starting point.

Phil, what do you have to add to that, on the question of Lincoln's greatness?

Rubinstein: I think what you have to see in someone like Lincoln, is that he understood his own role, his own mission, in a profound sense, in terms of an ongoing polemic with the population, with the citizenry.

The level of literacy of the Union soldiers, in many of their letters, is often commented upon. I think the



EIRNS/Sam Dixon

Phil Rubinstein



Library of Congress/Alexander Gardiner

President Lincoln gives his Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865. “Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away,” he said. “Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said ‘the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’” And yet, some idiots today say Lincoln was “really pro-slavery.”

thing to understand, is that much of the population was elevated to that level by Lincoln himself. He saw himself, as a young man, as representing the Founding Fathers, or the actual fight for the Republic. There’s the famous Lyceum speech, which is often denigrated by historians as being high-flown rhetoric, and so forth. But he states there, that the spirit of the American Revolution is dissipating, and we stand to lose the Republic. Now, this is about 1837—it’s about the time of Andrew Jackson shutting down the National Bank.

So, Lincoln understood himself to be in the tradition of the Founding Fathers, the American Revolution, creating a new republic. And he ends many of his speeches saying, “for all nations,” not just for the United States. He was a protégé, in many respects, of John Quincy Adams, who also saw this.

I think Lincoln saw, very early on, that the nation might not survive. And by 1854, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he, in effect, did something like what LaRouche is doing today: He forecast that the nation would not survive the onslaught by the British Empire to divide the nation: “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” And, at that point, he reentered politics,

after being out for a while, when there might have been some other idea of solving the problem; he reentered politics, he was part of the formation of the Republican Party. And he determined, that, if necessary, he himself would save the Republic, as comprehended by the Founding Fathers, by John Quincy Adams.

He acted on that, I think, for the rest of his life, knowing, as he said in Philadelphia as he was on the way to the Inauguration, that he could be assassinated. He decided that every element of his knowledge, and I think that this was highly underestimated: He was a great thinker. He was a Platonic thinker—that was his view of the nation-state. Without the nation-state, nothing else exists. The Republic, as developed in the Constitution. He stood on the essential principle of “All men are created equal,” as the necessary principle to activate, to reunite the nation, and to ultimately win the Civil War, should it come.

And he oriented everything from that standpoint. I think he, at the same time, was able to communicate this idea in his speeches and public letters. Nothing hits as hard as the Second Inaugural, because he basically says that there is a power greater than one’s individual

feelings, or one's individual position. And he even calls upon the Union to recognize its own failings: the North, in conceding the American System in the period leading into the Civil War—going for free trade, giving up the National Bank, etc.

The Civil War is really the continuation of the American Revolution. Solving the problem of slavery was essential to the existence of the nation, to breaking from free trade and so forth. And Lincoln stood, as you might say, upon the shoulders of others; he was a deep philosophical thinker; he was capable of facing the future, effectively alone, if necessary.

And the fate of the nation, and leading the nation, to deal with that future, to overcome the obstacles, and he had no problem disputing with his own supporters, polemicalizing with them, as he did in many of his public letters, and he used humor and irony, in a profound sense, to do that.

And so I think what one of the things to understand, is that this was not a “practical politician with some ambitions,” but a deep philosophical thinker, who elevated public discourse to the level of drama and poetry.

Revolutionary Principles

Schlanger: Michelle, I think there are probably still a few things that can be said: How have you come to appreciate the significance and greatness of Abraham Lincoln?

Lerner: Well, Phil already brought up Lincoln's Lyceum speech. In that speech, he proceeds from the standpoint that you had an entire generation of individuals that were themselves involved in fighting the American Revolution; he was pretty much surrounded by this generation, but it was dying out, and he was worried that the biggest threat to the United States was that the idea would actually tend to die out with them.

So, what he posed was that, really, it's not so much a military threat to the nation, but it's really the threat of the population not understanding what the principles were that fueled the American Revolution. And the interesting thing—and you see this throughout his entire life—is that despite all the pressure from various angles that he was getting, he had a very clear idea of the prin-

ciples, and that any type of action he would take would not compromise those principles that the Constitution was based upon at all. You see this reflected in the way that he dealt with the question of slavery: that he passionately wanted to end slavery, but he didn't want to do it in a way that was unlawful or unnatural to the process of development and evolution of the nation.

So, what he always put in the forefront of his mind were the principles, and the way that principles act throughout history, despite all the pressure that was put on him to act in the moment. He really had an idea of a long-term process, even into the future.

And, I just wanted to add that, the other day, on Lincoln's 200th birthday, you had a big celebration at Ford's Theater—kind of a funny place to have a celebration of someone's birthday, on the spot where they were assassinated, but, this was for the reopening of Ford's Theater. I would really hope that, being in that place, at the time that we're living in today, with the type of danger that exists today, I really hope that President Obama had a tingle in his spine, because clearly, the fact that somebody had to go to the extent of actually assassinating Lincoln, because of how powerful he was, really goes to show what type of opposition there is to really carrying out what Lincoln was carrying out, and the legacy that he represents, which is what needs to be carried forward today.

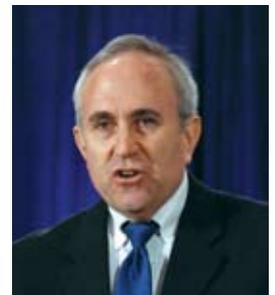
Schlanger: I'm glad you brought up the event the other night, because you've been in Washington, D.C., two years now, or maybe a little longer? Clearly, what you were talking about, in terms of the principles and the rekindling of the spirit of the Revolution—we saw this pathetic spectacle of the so-called debate on the stimulus package, and it's clear that what you're saying reflects the great gulf between what Lincoln represented, and what we have in Washington, D.C. today. Do you want to say something about that?

Lerner: I think the biggest problem is that we live in a time when people don't really appreciate the process of history. I don't think they fully understand it.

Look, first of all, as I mentioned earlier, Lincoln was growing up amongst a generation of people that fought the American Revolution. And, you see, his life ex-



EIRNS/Dan Sturman
Michelle Lerner



EIRNS
Harley Schlanger

tended through, continuously, from that period, through the Civil War.

And then, right after that, you had Franklin Roosevelt [b. 1882] actually living in a period when you still had the presence of—the memory of the Civil War. That was something that was part of his boyhood, something that people had a real grasp of. There were still people alive who were there; they remembered it. And he, Roosevelt, led us up through the fight in World War II, which the United States played a decisive role in.

This continuity is there, but today, it is really on the verge [of disappearing]. It's reflected in the way the people think about economics. This economic system that we have right now, is really about 30, 40 years old. And if you actually do a study, usually it takes about that long for an economic policy, if it's carried out, to actually die. If it's a bad economic policy, you have these cycles, and throughout the history of the United States, there's been a real fight over economic policies. There really isn't anything immortal about the policy that we have right now. And people act as though there were.

I've started to notice that, as if in direct response to Lyndon LaRouche, a number of people have been making mention—like [Rep.] Barney Frank on the radio the other day—that, we can't just start over from scratch. A number of people have been making these kinds of references, where they know the system is falling apart, but they can't conceive of actually going back to an idea of a principle again, and starting from that standpoint. Which is exactly what has to be done, every step of the way, to make progress.

It is what Lincoln did: He had to introduce the economic principle again with his Presidency, to reverse the decadence that we had gone through in the period leading up to that.

Without a real understanding of the process of history that we've gone through as a nation, it's a real challenge to get people to see what possibilities and what potentials actually do exist.

Hamiltonian Economics

Schlanger: Tony, let me go to you now, because Michelle brought this question up—the fear among the British of the resurgence of economic nationalism. What was it that Lincoln did that completely overturned the pre-Civil War geometry, and created the potential for a change in the world?

Chaitkin: Well, he reintroduced Hamilton's eco-

nomics, and transformed the country with high tariffs, government credits, the Transcontinental Railroad, and a number of other measures. But, I want to introduce that by going back to the other time, before 1861, when Lincoln travelled to Washington to assume office.

This was in 1847, when he had been elected to Congress. It was in the middle of the Mexican War, and he understood, *precisely*, that the policy of free trade, of leaving the economic power in the hands of an international cheap-labor system, such as plantation slavery (or today's globalism), is a crime, and would obliterate our country, and that this is imperialism.

So, on the way to Washington, he stopped off in Kentucky, and went to hear a speech by Henry Clay about the evils of the Mexican War. When he got to Congress, he introduced a measure to embarrass the sitting President, Polk, over having lied to get us in the war.

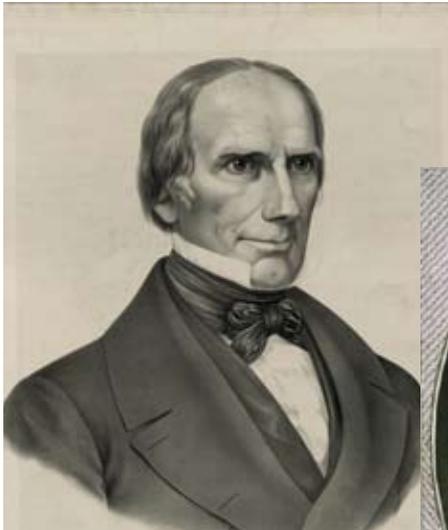
And Lincoln wrote later, when he was running for President, that the actual cause and purpose of the Mexican War—the U.S. invasion by the slaveowner-dominated government—had been to cover up the giveaway of half of the American territory on the West Coast, what is now British Columbia [in Canada], to the British Empire. That that was the reason that the war was carried out! That, in other words, the government of the United States was, at that time, acting as a stooge for the British.

When he was in Kentucky, and on his way to Washington, in 1847, Lincoln internally speculated and wrote a series of notes about international trade. These notes—they're called "Fragments on Trade," I think, and you'll see them in his Collected Works—in which he went through the entire case for imposing restrictions with protective tariffs to stop cheap British imports and to build a United States steel industry that would give us actual independence.

His arguments were very, very powerful, including the distinction between productive and non-productive labor. It isn't any good just to put somebody to work: You could pay somebody to carry a load around and around the outside of his house for eight hours, but that's not productive work. Some of our Boomers need



Anton Chaitkin



Library of Congress

Henry Clay (left) and John Quincy Adams were two of Lincoln's principal mentors. He embraced Clay's American System economic policies, and on his way to Washington as a young Congressman, he stopped in Kentucky to hear Clay speak against the Mexican War. Lincoln's term in Congress coincided with Adams' career there, which was distinguished by the elder statesman's courageous battle against slavery.



to understand that distinction. So this idea of economic nationalism that the Founders had, the real Founders—Washington, Franklin, Hamilton—was revived by Lincoln: He was chosen as a protectionist at the Republican Convention. That was a big fight in 1860. They knew what he had in his mind.

So, two days before he was inaugurated as President, on March 2, 1861, the Congress went ahead and put through the Morrill Tariff, which raised the tariffs on imported steel, in particular, and other things. Lincoln put through other measures to raise these to absolutely prohibitive levels, so that our steel industry began, because Lincoln was President.

He passed through the measures to have the government pay to build two transcontinental railroads: the Union Pacific, and then later, the Northern Pacific. He started the Agriculture Department, and put scientists throughout the country, in every county, to help the farmers. He started all the state colleges, and on and on. But the idea was, first, to grasp this truth: that our nation, with its elected government, had to be using its full array of powers to concentrate the credit and resources

of society to bring about the progress of our citizens, *as a fight against a mortal enemy*, that, for the last 250 years or so, has been located in London, and with a colony in Wall Street. He understood that completely. He understood the nature of *imperial wars* as well.

This is something that Franklin Roosevelt certainly picked up. His father was actually employed by Lincoln's friends in Philadelphia for a while, in the 1870s. And this idea of what the purpose of our country and our government is, this nationalist idea, where we respect and love other people's nationalism also—this has to come back now, or we're threatened with the same evils: the fascism that threatened FDR, and the breakup of our country that threatened Lincoln. And we have to do this again.

The Battle Against Slavery

Schlanger: This is an important point, given that the direction of the country, for the last 30 years, has been against national economic sovereignty, and national sovereignty—so-called globalization.

Phil, I'd like you to pick up another one of these broad themes that have come up around Lincoln, which is the question of slavery. Because the detractors of Lincoln—and there are many, from the Howard Zinn types at Boston University, to the reparations crowd—their argument is, that Lincoln was not really against slavery, that that was a secondary issue, or a tactical question. What does the evidence show us on Lincoln, and how does this relate to what Tony and Michelle were just talking about, on economic nationalism?

Rubinstein: I think the record of lying about him is incredible. I think the most extreme one I heard is that he had slaves. This is just not true. There's no factual basis for it. There's no historic record of it. But it's just stated, and slandered.

But, more substantially, you have two things.

One is, everything in the record, going back to when Lincoln was in his mid-20s, and he introduced into the Illinois State Legislature, when he was part of the Long Nine, from Sangamon County, he introduced a resolution, with Daniel Stone, on the question of slavery in Washington, D.C. itself. Now, a lot of people have said, well, this was just a posture. But the truth of the matter



A painting of one of the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates in Illinois, during the Senate election of 1858. Speaking of slavery in the debate in Alton, Lincoln located it in terms of “the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle, in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, ‘You work and toil and earn bread, and I eat it.’”

was—witness John Quincy Adams’ efforts on this issue of slavery in Washington, D.C.—this was the point of attack on slavery, in part, because it was a symbol: This was the capital of the United States, and it was virtually a slave town.

But, number two, it was within the Constitution, and Michelle raised this point: The only way to attack slavery within the Constitution, was to first go at it on the Washington, D.C. question. And then, use that as leverage to the question of the morality of slavery in the country as a whole.

And this was the point: Rep. John Quincy Adams, every year, for ten years, I think it was, introduced various bills to lift slavery in Washington, which was where the Congress had had legal jurisdiction. And of course, every year, the Confederate faction, led by Sen. [John C.] Calhoun, would get it tabled. It couldn’t even come up for discussion

The issue of slavery in Washington, D.C. was the core debate over slavery in this period of the 1830s and 1840s.

Now, there’s nothing in anything Lincoln ever said that condones slavery. He was absolutely opposed to it.

He thought it was hideous. In the Lincoln-Douglas debates, he references this, over and over again.

I think there are two issues that come up. One, he answers absolutely clearly, in his letter to [Horace] Greeley, after Greeley, in August of ’62, attacks him for not simply freeing the slaves—the Abolitionist line. Of course, Greeley was a funny character in this respect, but Lincoln understood that much of the Abolitionist line was an effort to destroy the nation, by saying, “Let the South go.” And implicitly, because the plan was to spread slavery throughout the West, to let the whole of the continental boundaries, what would become the United States, be divided up.

The Abolitionists said, “I will keep my hands clean by disassociating from the South.” And much of this was run by the British. One of the more interesting elements of this was Frederick Douglass, who broke with the Abolitionists over the question of the validity of the Constitution.

And what Lincoln answered to Greeley in a public letter, was, if we don’t have a Union, we have slavery. If the republic of the United States does not survive, then, you’re conceding slavery, not only in the South,

not only in the Western territories of the United States, but everywhere: the Caribbean, South and Central America.

Lincoln stood firmly, and with a great deal of intellectual courage, on that question. And when he found the moment to liberate the slave, under the conditions he could, constitutionally, he did it. Because, remember, people said, “Well, it was just in the states that had seceded from the Union.” *That was where Lincoln had legal, constitutional sway*, because he was the Commander in Chief of a nation at war. That was the point at which he could, by Executive action, free the enemy’s slaves, as an act of war. And that was exactly the way he approached it. And it was an irrefutable argument. But it wasn’t just an irrefutable argument; it was a statement of a moral stand, at the same time.

Chaitkin: That’s how the slaves were freed—by the Army.

Martin Luther King

Schlanger: This gets to one of the next points I wanted to pick up: How it is that a country such as ours has been saved on several occasions by this kind of leadership? The Founding Fathers gave one example of that; Lincoln, certainly, as a virtually solitary individual (he had allies, but Lincoln stood head and shoulders above the crowd); the same thing with FDR.

Now, Michelle, Tony and Phil have been studying this for years; what have you read? What’s given you your insights into this quality of Lincoln? Because, I think a lot of our listeners are trying to sort through these arguments, and, we’re seeing a lot of slanders against Lincoln, as well as attacks on FDR coming from the same people who supported the Fascists in Italy and Germany against him. So, Michelle, how, as a young person, did you tackle, this question to get to the truth of who Lincoln really was?

Lerner: It actually first came up from looking at Martin Luther King, because, his famous “I have a dream” speech—I believe it was that speech: He begins with language that references Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, and it was given in front of the Lincoln Memorial, in fact, and makes reference to that in the very beginning of that speech.

So, it really came up in the context of thinking about what qualities of leadership are necessary to move a population. And the closest thing that I could think of, that I had more of a sensual image of, was the figure of Martin Luther King. So I began by looking at King, and

thinking about how King looked at the question of American history.

Because in the school system, you come through with an idea that there might be some good things about the United States, but overall, it was just a continuation of what was going on in Europe.

So, looking at how somebody like Martin Luther King, who was coming out of a generation that had lived under Franklin Roosevelt, who had a clearer sense of this historical continuity, I think, as evidenced by the way that he took on his fight, and the way that he saw the Constitution: It’s actually very similar to the way that Lincoln was thinking about how you use the power of the Constitution to improve the quality of the society, actually. Coming at it from that standpoint was the entry.

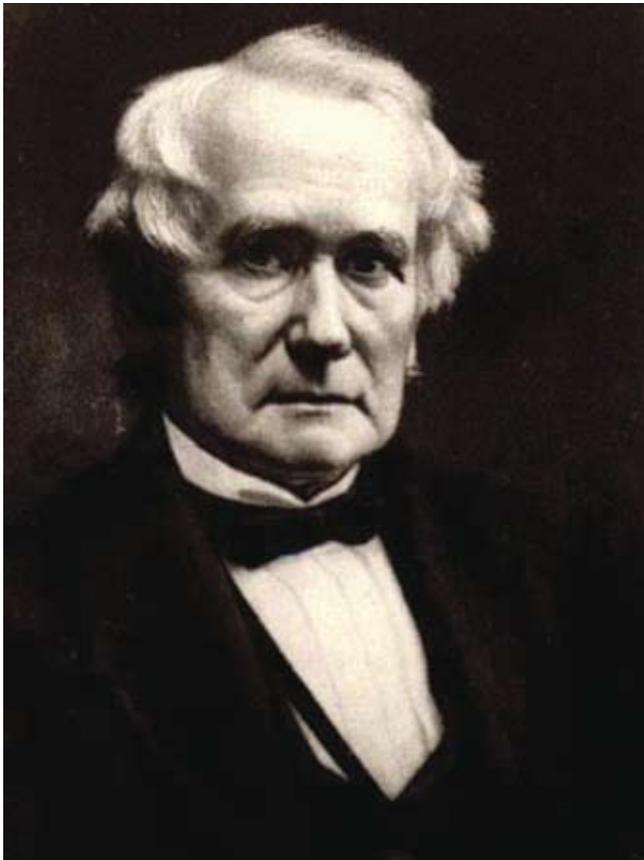
But there’s another question that comes up: How actually do you do an historical investigation? I find that the best source is to go to the writings of Lincoln himself, the speeches that he gave, and the people that were around him. I think that Lincoln is the most written-about person—there are more biographies of Lincoln than anybody else in the world! So you have this *huge* mountain of information in front of you. But how do you find your way through that, and get a really coherent picture that, historically, makes sense?

I think the way you do it, is by looking at the people he was collaborating with; looking at the things he said, the things they said. One of the other aspects is understanding his economic policies, which are very rarely discussed, in many of these books—it’s very hard to find his economic views. But somebody like Henry Carey, whom Lincoln had spent a lot of time studying, and I guess was actually one of the advisors to Lincoln—you look at the type of dialogue that they’re having, the things that they found were necessary to write.

And I think that it just draws you in. You just start doing that, and it just draws you in. There’s a whole world.

The Pursuit of Happiness

Schlanger: You mentioned Carey as a very important figure. I’d like to get something from Tony on this, because, Tony, I think you still have an unpublished manuscript, which looks at the economic history of the 19th Century. You mentioned earlier, free trade against the fight for protectionism—but, one of the things I heard President Obama bring up, in his talk at Ford



Henry C. Carey, the leading 19th-Century economist of the American System, as against British free trade and slavery. He was Lincoln's economic advisor.

Theater, was that, in addition to his fight to save the Union, President Lincoln also started the Transcontinental Railroad.

How do you pull this together? To go back to this question of the relationship of the idea of the nation from the Founding Fathers, and the connection to scientific and technological progress.

Chaitkin: Again, I think if you start with Franklin, and, in that regard, reference Leibniz, in Germany, the two of them had this notion of “happiness,” which was, in Franklin’s case, to get involved in almost every possible project, starting with the highest science on the planet: the science of electricity and related matters of the atmosphere and so forth, approaching it from the standpoint of giving *power* to mankind, absolute power, tremendous power.

Often, we have been taught, especially during the ’60s and later, that power belongs to corrupt people, belongs to the Devil. But the American idea of Franklin, and earlier, of Leibniz—and their personal life is

shown by all their projects—is that happiness is to apply this *genius*, this *excitement* for science and improvement to statecraft, and to spread the idea to other people that we could set in motion a society, with a government actually controlled by the population, and that that society and that government would have, as its purpose, ennobling each person in the country.

The way Lincoln expressed this, in his July 4, 1861 message to Congress, was that the question was, could the people have their own government, which was for their benefit and improvement, rather than be ruled arbitrarily by the powerful? Lincoln said:

“It may be affirmed without extravagance, that the free institutions we enjoy have developed the powers and improved the condition of our whole people, beyond any example in the world. There are many single regiments in the Army, whose regiments, one and another, possess full practical knowledge of all the arts, sciences, professions, and whatever else useful or elegant is known in the world. There’s scarcely one from which there could not be selected a President, a Cabinet, a Congress, and perhaps a court, abundantly confident to administer the government itself. The government which has conferred such benefits should not be broken up.”

What’s the other idea, the enemy idea? I think people have to search their hearts now, and look at countries like Afghanistan, India, China, South America, and say, “If those people are to be permitted to have a future, then, we know, they know, that it will have to be with steel mills, with nuclear power plants, with absolutely powerful ways to shape and improve nature.”

The enemy, the British Empire, the Confederacy, the slavery system says, “Absolutely not.” That is the “green” idea. The green idea says, “We are stopping the conquest of nature by mankind.” If you do that, then you’re saying to the poor and the potential citizens of the world, “You are not citizens. You are fit to be exterminated.” Those are the two sides in the world.

The Nation Is the Caretaker of the Souls of Its Citizens

Schlanger: I think this is one of the most profound issues here, that gets at the heart of the problem. And, Phil, I’d like you to extend that a little further: the question of the British Empire, then and now. Because, of course, I would say, one of the other tragedies of our present time, is that I saw very little coverage in the

U.S. media, of the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Very little. And instead, there was a lot of coverage of Charles Darwin's birthday, which I believe was his 200th, also.

So, Phil, when we're looking at the British Empire, then and now, what are the parallels?

Rubinstein: I think the strongest parallel that you can get, is if you take Darwin, or you take the whole question of Artificial Intelligence—the Bertrand Russell outlook, in a sense—there is no such thing as human creativity.

What Michelle's referring to, what Tony's referring to, is that Lincoln viewed the economy as the basis for developing the creative powers, through the use of the creative powers of the individual human being, and having a nation which can then act on those creative discoveries. In a profound sense, the nation is the caretaker of the souls of its citizens. And, it carries the discoveries, the actions, the contributions of the individual into the future, as the development of the nation.

But this means that a certain idea of the creative powers of the human individual, is what a society, and wealth in an economy, are all about.

Now what's the British or Venetian outlook, Paolo Sarpi's outlook? If you look at the Ockham that Sarpi bases himself on, there is no such thing as the creative powers of the human mind. There's nothing but sense-experience, and the reactions to those sense-experiences. This is the basis of Adam Smith; it's the basis of the free market. Human beings have only emotional reactions: pleasure and pain, or, actually, sensory reactions, not even emotional. And somehow, in the mix of those animal-like responses, nature puts a price on a commodity.

Whereas, the American System says that it's the development of the creative powers and discoveries, that allows society, as Tony was mentioning, to use the powers of mankind to also access the powers of nature.

So, what was Lincoln up against? What was slavery? Much of the human species could not think, could not develop, and, in the view of the Confederacy, *should not* develop. They should simply be at the behest of some slightly more powerful form of animal, called the oligarchy. Or, you might say, these are the alpha males that come out of historic development.

So, slavery, the spread of slavery; the spread of drug usage, the opium usage against the Chinese population: the same thing we see today, in Afghanistan, in South

America, and so on. This is what Lincoln was fighting. This is what he knew to be wrong.

I think one of the most interesting ways to look at it, using a little bit of the humor and the irony of Lincoln, is that one of the problems we have is precisely the idea that globalization, the free market, free trade is nature's way of telling you what to do. It's nature's control over the human individual. Now, the reality of what Lincoln understood—and he makes jokes about this: For example, Lincoln, in 1837, addressed the Illinois legislature. And, he says, what is capitalism? These capitalists generally act harmoniously, and in concert, to fleece the people. Or another, in 1861, 24 years later: A few men own capital, and that few avoid labor themselves.

So, he had an ironic, even humorous view of these things.

But I think one of the important things is that the idea that the choice is between some idea of socialism and capitalism, is completely foreign. The American System is a *different idea*. The whole sense of political economy is a British conception: Ricardo, Smith. And in his message to Congress, Dec. 3, 1861, Lincoln says, "Labor is prior to, and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is superior of capital and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are worthy of protection, as any other rights."

He also sees labor as the development of labor power: "There is no permanent class of hired laborers among us. Twenty-five years ago, I was a hired laborer. The hired laborer of yesterday labors on his own account today, and will hire others to labor for him tomorrow."

So, what could be more different than the sense of progress and development, versus the idea in the celebrated Darwin, that we are nothing but complicated animals?

Schlanger: This has been quite a provocative discussion of the real Abraham Lincoln. I would encourage people to go to the LaRouche PAC website and look at the Feb. 11 webcast delivered by Lyndon LaRouche. This is the quality of leadership you'll see from the way that LaRouche addresses our contemporary problems, that is characteristic of what we've been discussing, and a continuity of leadership from that of Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and to the present, what's been lacking, painfully lacking over the last 20 years.