

DAVID MADDEN'S TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S1838

My name is David Madden, founding director of the United States Civil War Center at Louisiana State University, present Chair of the Louisiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, and the author of 40 books, including Civil War history.

Profoundly convinced of the enduring truth that, in the words of the late venerable historian Shelby Foote, the Civil War is the crossroads of our being, I initiated, several years ago, the grass roots effort that has led to Senate Bill 1838. Shelby Foote put the emphasis on "is", not "was," as I do today because the four years of battles that began and ended produced almost 12 years of Reconstruction, the legacy of which Americans, in the North and in the South, have experienced ever since.

To study, meditate upon, and commemorate the Civil War throughout the years 2011-2015 is to understand 150 years of aftershocks as we also become more informed and aware of positive effects, one of which is that African Americans now hold a multitude of high offices throughout this land.

I understand that the Commission described in this bill will ensure a suitable national observance of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War by cooperating with and assisting States and national organizations with programs and activities, encouraging inclusiveness and appropriately recognizing the experiences and points of view of all people affected by the Civil War, and by providing assistance in the development of programs, projects, and a vast range of activities about the Civil War and Reconstruction that have lasting educational value.

When I created the United States Civil War Center over ten years ago, I envisioned a Sesquicentennial that would be far richer in possibilities than the Centennial, given the fact that we are a far different nation. A Sesquicentennial would look at the war through the perspectives of every academic discipline, every profession, every occupation, greatly enhanced by the perspectives of African Americans, Native Americans, other ethnic minorities, and civilians generally, while emphasizing women and children. By over emphasizing the battles, Americans have missed the war's many other facets, including the effects of Reconstruction, for 150 years.

Our emotions, our imaginations, and our intellects have not yet completed the "unfinished business" to which Lincoln referred in his Gettysburg Address.

The four-year commemoration of the Centennial of the Civil War in the years 1961-1965 had a special relevance and produced a national interest in the war that has continued to this day. The Sesquicentennial provides a second time and the last time for Americans living today to deepen and broaden our understanding of the causes and effects of the war. Or, as the bill states: "The sesquicentennial of the Civil War presents a significant opportunity for Americans to recall and reflect upon the Civil War and its legacy in a spirit of reconciliation and reflection."

An even more special time exists for us today as we try to understand the civil wars of other countries in which we are engaged and the numerous other civil wars worldwide that demand our attention and our concern. The historical context for our civil war is global, for almost every nation throughout history has forged its being in civil war. The United States Civil War Center's website reveals that our civil war is helping other nations understand their own. President Abraham Lincoln's primary goal was to unite the nation, not just for its own sake but also for the good of all nations. He envisioned the leadership that our democracy would provide for the world as a sacred obligation.

It is therefore only fitting in our favored time that, following its creation of the commissions charged with commemorating the bicentennials of the nation and currently of its great President Lincoln and the Centennial of the Civil War, the Congress of these United States create a Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission to support the efforts of the states north and south that are now planning or that have already created their own commissions to make a four year re-visit to the crossroads of our being.

Over a decade ago, Gabor Boritt, founding director of the Gettysburg Civil War Institute, and I, as founding Director of the United States Civil War Center, seeing the need to voice a grass-roots call for a Sesquicentennial Commission, drafted passages for the bill, first introduced by Senator Breaux of Louisiana.

Hard times and wars were probably the reason the bill has languished. But we remain convinced that even, or especially, in hard times, the positive effects of these commemorative activities are well worth the resources of towns and cities, states, and the federal government.

After resigning my directorship of the Civil War Center at LSU to finish writing the Civil War novel, out of the research for which I conceived the Center, I remained committed to urging the creation of the Commission. In 2007, aware that the Sesquicentennial was drawing nigh, I created, in the office of Louisiana Secretary of State Jay Dardenne, the National Civil War Sesquicentennial Initiative; its mission is to stimulate and direct efforts to plan and facilitate the commemoration. Connecting with all Civil War organizations, I discovered that, with time passing and fearing that no commission was forthcoming, the leaders of most organizations were disheartened.

One year later, I am glad to report progress. Several states have taken the idea of commemorating the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War seriously. Some are working with their neighbors while others working alone. Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina each have strong state organizations and are cooperating in extended trail and tourist marketing. Pennsylvania and Virginia have established a regional driving route study called The Journey Through Hallowed Ground along Route 15/20, the Old Carolina Road, from Gettysburg to Charlottesville. West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia have created the John Brown 150th Anniversary Quad-State Committee, which effectively begins the Sesquicentennial activities. Maryland has created the Hear of the Civil War Heritage Area. Connecticut has created a Sesquicentennial Commemoration group to honor the role its soldiers played. New Jersey and Ohio have

created similar bodies. West Virginia now has the Civil War Task Force to prepare for the celebration. Arkansas created its commission and has since divided the state into regions that focus on campaigns fought in the state as well as events for each year of the war. Missouri has created the Civil War Heritage Foundation, which has similar goals. An initial effort through the Louisiana Secretary of State's Office has begun limited planning in the Pelican State. Texas is beginning the process of establish historic trails and byways. All of these efforts have been created without a great deal of synergy. Each can be strengthened and augmented by a central planning structure and clearing house—a Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission. The diverse nature of not only each state, but of their efforts put forward during the Civil War exemplifies the rich complexities of the subject and the positive challenge of the task ahead.

Not yet in formation are several states that were heavily involved in the war and that may be in special need of federal guidance and assistance. However, the fact that some states and even regions have already secured some funds and set plans in motion will lessen the need for federal funds.

The effectiveness of states already involved will be greatly enhanced by the leadership of the federal commission, the existence of which may also act to encourage other states to create activities. The Civil War and its aftermath affected every state in the Union and its territories, including California and even Montana.

Likely activities of the Sesquicentennial extend across a broad spectrum, consisting of commemorative ceremonies, speeches, lectures, Civil War heritage trails, preservation projects, exhibits, plays, movies, and other mass media presentations, newspaper and periodical articles, and, of course, books. Many very fine books came out of the Centennial years, as during the current Lincoln Bicentennial. Among universities whose presses are known for publishing Civil War books are LSU, Mississippi, University of Arkansas, University of Kansas, Southern Illinois University, University of Tennessee, University of Georgia, and Kent State, which also publishes a periodical.

Since the Civil War, many little known places and events of the war have been further explored or discovered. For instance, the steamboat Sultana, carrying homeward about 2,000 Union soldiers released from Catapa and Andersonville prisons, exploded in the dark, in the rain several miles above Memphis; over 1500 soldiers and about 200 civilians drowned in the worst maritime disaster in American history, worse than the Titanic, as President Lincoln's funeral train was crossing the country. Even after four books and a documentary have appeared, most Americans remain unaware. This event is a symbolic expression, embodying every adjective for sad loss, of the Civil War. Missing so far is a national conceptual imagination that places the Sultana disaster in a tragic light. Meanwhile, the darkness of that night still hangs, almost 150 years deepening, over the smoke, the screams and the prayers of the victims and the compassionate cries of the rescuers, some of them Confederate soldiers who were also returning home. Only the light of an extraordinary imagination can unweave and raise this unique and complexly meaningful event from the bottom of the Father of Waters.

The Sesquicentennial will call attention to other places and events.

The Centennial gave a boost to longtime efforts to create a state park at Port Hudson, Louisiana, which kept the Union army from coming down river to New Orleans after Vicksburg fell; even so, its fame is not widespread. Efforts that are well underway to bring well-deserved attention to the vital Red River Campaign may well be successful if given encouragement and support by the Sesquicentennial Commission.

The siege at Fort Sanders in Knoxville, Tennessee and generally, the war in the southern Appalachian region are little known.

A Sesquicentennial Commission would help speed up the effort now underway to create a Knoxville area Civil War Center. An effort in the Office of Louisiana's Secretary of State to create a Civil War and Reconstruction Center is now in the planning stage.

The Commission could encourage small towns to discover and make known as tourist attractions Civil War events in their history, thus stimulating their economies. A good example is Black Mountain, North Carolina, about which it is little known, even by its citizens, that so many black slaves escaping from South Carolina made their way to Black Mountain that its population grew from 0.3% African American, to over 89% African American.

Very seldom is the fact cited that 30,000 civilians were Civil War casualties.

Interest in the American Civil War is worldwide. The United States Civil War Center website has received an astonishing number of hits from nations around the world, from Israel to Malaysia. Former Secretary of State Madeline Albright told me that she wishes she had had in hand the book I am writing on the nature and history of civil wars worldwide when she was Ambassador to the UN. Many parallels are readily apparent between our Civil War and The Taiping Rebellion, a widespread civil war in China from 1850 to 1864, led by Christian convert Hong Xiuquan, against the ruling Qing Dynasty. To understand our Civil War is, then, to understand ourselves as we are; to understand the Chinese Civil War is to understand the Chinese today.

If we think of the Civil War Sesquicentennial as four years of many kinds of occasions for revisiting not only the history of the Civil War but also for revisiting our entire history, we will see, as Lincoln often did, how it reflects the legacy of the Declaration of Independence and the consequent Revolutionary War and the legacy of the era in which the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment were forged. The legacies of those events often played a role in successive phases of the Civil War era.

We will see how issues dramatized throughout the pre-War and the War years affected the conduct of the long, punitive Reconstruction era, affected by the fact that the assassinated President could not pursue his carefully crafted non-punitive plan for Reconstruction.

We will see how prolonged economic, racial, political, and social problems in the former Confederate states put a drag on the progress of democracy in the nation as a whole throughout times of both prosperity and adversity, and through the Spanish American war, two world wars, the Korean and Vietnam wars, and the civil rights era.

And we will see ways in which the Sesquicentennial will open up fresh perspectives on our involvement in the Iraq and Afghanistan “civil wars.” How that may happen, we will see, if we remember how the discussions, debates, and books during the conduct of the Civil War Centennial years of 1961 through 1965 influenced the activities of the civil rights movement in ways both negative and positive.

In such considerations of history, we made and we shall make history.

Historian Shelby Foote also said, “There are two sins for which America can never atone—slavery and reconstruction.” Even though he was a Southerner, he stressed America, North and South in that pronouncement. Lincoln made the first great effort to atone for slavery; it is clear that we, both North and South, would not have to atone for Reconstruction had Lincoln lived, newly re-elected with enhanced power to promulgate his own plan. A major change in the study of the Civil War since the Centennial is an increased emphasis upon the effect of the war: Reconstruction. The one can most meaningfully studied within the context of the other. Most obviously, the effect of the war upon John Wilkes Booth was to assassinate President Lincoln and that act affected the nature of Reconstruction. The legacy of Reconstruction is in force in our daily lives.

An understanding of the causes and effects of the Civil War in the context of these very changed United States of America will make the democratic vistas of our future brighter, will perhaps lead us at long, long last into an era of reconciliation between north and south and conciliation between white and African Americans.

The Centennial’s published report to the Congress and a recent book, Troubled Commemoration by Robert J. Cook, provide guidance for a Sesquicentennial Commission by describing the organization’s structure and its procedures, the trials and tribulations of the Centennial, and the ways and extent to which they were conducted and overcome.

Those books also clearly show how very different the Sesquicentennial must and may be. With the guidance of the African American Civil War Museum in Washington, along with many other organizations, the participation of African Americans will be stronger, as will that of Native Americans and other minorities, including Latinos, Asians, Jews, and Americans of every national origin.

Today, our democratic spirit of compromise and practices of resolution make disputes among all participants far less likely. For instance, despite infrequent and strictly localized debates over the Confederate battle flag (often replaced by the far less problematic Confederate states flag), the Southern states are so thoroughly transformed,

economically, politically, and socially as to make predictions of greater cooperation with Northern states and with African Americans credible.

The following list of the U. S. Civil War Center's advisory board members who have served over the years will give some indication of the sustained support for the creation of a Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission:

Gabor Boritt, Lincoln scholar and Founding Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg, sister organization to the USCWC; James I. "Bud" Robertson, Jr., formerly chair of the Civil War Centennial board, present director of the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, John Hope Franklin, renowned African American program historian (deceased); Shelby Foote, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and historian (deceased); Ted Turner; Ron Maxwell, author and director of Gettysburg and Gods and Generals; Jeff Shaara, author of Gods and Generals, two other Civil War novels and several others depicting America's wars, donor of the Michael Shaara prize for Civil War novels; Glenn Seaborg, Nobel Prize winner in physics (deceased); William Davis, author of 40 books of mostly Civil War history, director of Virginia Center for Civil War Studies; Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, sports legend, writing a Civil War novel; Rita Dove, African American former U. S. Poet Laureate; Frank Magill, publisher, who pledged a million dollars to establish the USCWC at LSU (deceased, replaced by his son); E. O. Wilson, Pulitzer Prize winning biologist; Ken Burns, renowned director of the epic documentary The Civil War; T. Michael Parrish, Civil War historian who first proposed the creation of the Sesquicentennial Commission; John Simon, Grant historian and director of the Grant Foundation; Ed Bearss, chief historian of the National Park Service; Waylon Jennings, composer-singer of Civil War songs (deceased); Tom Wicker, journalist, novelist.

The nature of the Civil War, its causes and effects, and its status as the crossroads of our being, make the work of a Sesquicentennial Commission peculiarly well situated to make American citizens aware of their entire history. Our generation has already been favored with major commemorations: The Civil War Centennial, the Bicentennial of our nation, the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial. Nevertheless, ignorance of our history, from Plymouth Rock to Iraq, is a reality of very serious national concern. For instance, despite the good work of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and several state commissions, the hard fact is that many Americans, among them the well educated, do not know, within three months of the end, that the Bicentennial is underway. All the greater was and is the need for the current Lincoln Commission and in the following year for the Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission.

A major focus of most activities during the four years of the Civil War sesquicentennial, as it has been for the one-year Lincoln Bicentennial, will be upon the children, in schools and in other public venues. Teaching history to our children is made all the more difficult in a context of adult ignorance of history. A nation regarded as the leader of the world must not act out of ignorance of its own history. Knowing its own history will make this nation as world leader much more credible and effective. We would do well to close that sequence of commemorations in our time with the Civil War Sesquicentennial.

A WORKING LIST OF SOME CIVIL WAR QUESTIONS,
TOPICS, AND PROJECTS TO EXPLORE

Prepared 5/15/07, revised 12/1/09

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A FEW QUESTIONS

What are instances of American participation in Civil Wars in foreign countries?

What were civilian life and death experiences during the War and Reconstruction?

What was the role of each ethnic group [Jews, African American, Native Americans, Asians, etc.] in the war and how do their experiences compare?

How did the war and reconstruction shape the West? {Missoula, rebels and Yankees}

What have been the legacy, good and bad, of the War and Reconstruction, and how do the two eras compare?

In what ways was the Mexican-American war legacy active in the Civil War?

How does the postal service in the Confederacy compare with the federal?

How does Reconstruction compare with American post-war policies in each war since?

How does the Taiping Rebellion and the Chinese Reconstruction compare with the American Civil War and Reconstruction?

How do the War and Reconstruction define American new state and regional identities?

What role has statistics played in our understanding of the war and Reconstruction and what are future possibilities?

How might the war and reconstruction be most effectively taught?

Why are northerners more fascinated with Southern generals than with Northern?

Why did the South lose and how did the North win?

PERSPECTIVES OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES, PROFESSIONS, AND
OCCUPATIONS ON THE CIVIL WAR AND POSSIBLE TOPICS

[Note: Major topics all caps]

Accidents, contingencies

Advertising

African American soldiers

Agriculture

AGRONOMY. Was the nature and practice of southern agronomy the undoing of the Confederacy?

American Civil War and Civil War Throughout History: American Civil War and the Chinese Teiping Rebellion

American Revolution and the American Civil War

Animals [horses, dogs, predators]

Anthropology [excavation of battlefields and small towns that have vanished]

Architecture, effects of, as in use of churches for hospitals

ARTICLES, REVIEWS [[Civil War Book Review](#)]

Artists, Nast, Forbes, etc.

Atlantic studies re Civil War

Biography and autobiography, the nature of, re CW

Books written for Children [Over the past 150 years, how have books written for children shaped our attitudes about the war's cause and its legacy?]

Books not yet written [see my Civil War Book Review columns for past 9 years; many books discussed have been reprinted]

Books to rediscover and facilitate reprinting

Business [What forces in the war were set loose in the realm of commerce and business administration?]

Camp life

Cemeteries

Children, short and long term effects

Chemistry [major re gun powder etc.] How did the war stimulate developments in the science of chemistry?

CIVIL WAR FIRSTS:

A workable machine gun

A steel ship

A successful submarine

A "snorkel" breathing device

A wide-ranging corps of press correspondents in battle areas

American conscription

American bread lines

American President assassinated
 Aerial reconnaissance
 Antiaircraft fire
 Army ambulance corps
 Blackouts and camouflage under aerial observation
 Cigarette tax
 Commissioned American Army chaplains
 Department of justice (Confederate)
 Electrically exploded bombs and torpedoes
 Fixed ammunition
 Field trenches on a grand scale
 Flame throwers
 Hospital ships
 Ironclad navies
 Land-mine fields
 Legal voting for servicemen
 Long-range rifles for general use
 Medal of Honor
 Military telegraph
 Military railroads
 Naval torpedoes
 Negro U.S. Army Officer (Major M.R. Delany)
 Organized medical and nursing corps
 Photography of battle
 Railroad artillery
 Repeating rifles
 Revolving gun turrets
 The bugle call, "Taps"
 The Income tax
 The wigwag signal code in battle
 The periscope, for trench warfare
 Telescopic sights for rifles
 Tobacco tax
 U.S. Navy Admiral
 U.S. Secret Service
 Withholding tax
 Wire entanglements
 Wide-scale use of anesthetics for wounded
 Source: The Civil War, Strange and Fascinating Facts by Burke Davis

CIVIL WAR TOPICS FOR CONFERENCES, LECTURES, PANELS, ETC.: Civil wars elsewhere, American participation in, Civilian life and death

CLASSICAL LANGUAGES: How did the common study of classical languages affect the thinking of generals on both sides?

COMMERCE, short and long term effects

Confederate exiles, South America, Europe, etc.

CONFERENCES

Copeland's "Lincoln Portrait" [concert]

Cotton, national and worldwide impact of scarcity

Courses [Civil War Literature, etc.]

Dentists [impact of severe toothache]

Differences and conflicts among the southern states

Douglass and Whitman meet Lincoln [new plays]

ECOLOGY What transient ecosystems did the war create?

Economics, a huge subject with many facets

Education during and after [What was the war's impact upon the development of public and private education?

Effect of the war upon manifest destiny

Effect upon India and other Asian countries

Elderly, effect upon

Engineering, very major, but neglected aspect [What was the role of engineers in the war? Bridge builders, etc.]

Environmental effects, short and long term

Ethnic Groups in the Civil War [Jews, Native Americans, Asians]

EYE DOCTORS [What might ophthalmologists contribute to our understanding of perception re battles, etc.]

Family, concept of, North and South

Fiction [How have fiction, poetry, theater, and film shaped our vision of the war?]

FOLKLORE [In what ways have Civil War folklore and popular culture acted as a force in northern and southern society, then and now?]

Foreign effects, then and now

Foreign perceptions of the war and reconstruction

Foreigners, participation in [esp. Germans]

Friedman play, original, about Mary Surratt

Garibaldi and Lee and Grant, comparisons

General Robert E. Lee as National Icon

GENERALS, before and after, re our CW and others. Why are Northerners Fascinated by Confederate Generals? Lee, Stonewall, Forrest, Grant, Sherman, compared with....

Geography [What might geographers contribute to our understanding of the war? One recent book changed facts about Vicksburg campaign]

Gottschalk's Civil War music, concerts

Hospitals. Create interactive, lighted map of

If the south had won

Imports and exports

Internet, effect on study of

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES [How may the Civil War serve as a vast subject model for Interdisciplinary Studies?]

Jews in the Civil War, North and South

JOURNALISM [How did the war affect the development of American journalism?]

LABOR [What was the effect of the war upon the development of the organized labor movement?]

Law [note: great interest among lawyers in the CW, but few have written books about it, esp. not about the role of law.]

LECTURES, subjects, such as those on this list.

Legacy, Good and Bad, of The Civil War and Reconstruction

Lincoln and Davis, as regarded as commanders in chief

LINGUISTICS [How might linguists show relationships between words and actions?]

Living history [a new emphasis since the Centennial]

Lovers, north and south, compared

Magazines, about the CW, hard copy and Internet

MAPS, making and their effects, during and after

MAP OF THE THOUSAND MILE FRONT [seven states along the Mississippi]

MAP VISION provides a kind of omniscience.

MATHEMATICS [What were some significant and decisive applications of mathematics in the war?]

Medical professions, role of, and inception of

Medicine

Memorials, in this nation and worldwide
 Mexican War legacy active in the Civil War
 Military lessons. How is the Civil War still relevant to military science?
 Mountain folks [Appalachians, etc.] compared with lowlanders
 MOVIES, features and documentaries; influence of Ken Burns
 MUSIC [How did music soothe the savage breast of war or ignite the fire within?]
 MYRIADMINDEDNESS [How may the Civil War serve as a model in the training to
 achieve that innovative ability?]
 National battlefield parks, creation of, functions of today
 Newsletters, present and new, of organizations, interdisciplinary included
 Newspapers, north and south
 NUTRITION [What was the effect of poor nutrition upon military performance?]
 ORATORY, religious and political as incendiary causes and conduct of the war
 PAINTING, Homer, Chapman....
 PHILOSOPHY [How may the American Civil War provide a model for constructing a
 philosophy and psychology of the phenomenon of civil wars worldwide throughout
 history?]
 PHOTOGRAPHY [Does some Civil War painting and photography transcend
 documentary value to become art? Impact upon viewers, then and now.]
 PLANTATIONS. Public image of the Plantation in the New Millennium
 Poetry, written then and ever since
 Popular culture, past and present
 Postal Service, north and south contrasted
 PRIZES. Shelby Foote prize for best popular CW and/or Reconstruction history [we have
 widow's approval]
 PSYCHOLOGY. What were the psychological effects of war and Reconstruction upon
 children, thus upon succeeding generations? Differences, north and south.
 Publishers, role of, past, present, and future. Publishing new books, as in the Centennial
 Railroads [How did the war affect the development of railroads in later decades?]
 Reconstruction compared with U. S. post-war policies since; legacy of
 Re-enactors, Centennial and now

Regional identities, defined by the war

Religion and the Civil War. How is the influence of religious rhetoric and political oratory seen in the diaries and letters of soldiers and civilians, North and South?

REVIEWS of books on the War

Rhetoric, spoken and written, including posters, religion, Politics

Rivers [In what ways were rivers important in the war?]

Roundtables, Civil War

Shipping, merchant

Slavery and contrabands

Soldiers, resettling,

Southern and northern sons of organizations, etc., commonalities, differences

Sports [How did sports affect the mental and physical health of troops during the war?]

States, roles of each. Compared and contrasted

Statistics about [Given the impact of statistics at the end of the war on our sense of its scope, how might today's much more complex and sophisticated statistical tools modify our view of the war?]

Surgery, practices

Teaching about the war and Reconstruction, on all levels

TECHNOLOGY [Which special circumstances spurred developments in technology?]

Textbooks about

THEATER, including opera and music. Plays: The Trial Of Mary Surrat; Andersonville; Secret Service. A Play By Robert Penn Warren, Listen To The Mockingbird.

Commission new plays

Towns, effects upon, streets, forts, parks, etc. named for the generals

Travel during and after

Trends in the study of

Veterinary science, the shaping of

WEATHER, including acoustic shadows [How did weather determine the day-by-day conduct of the war?]

WEST. How the war shaped the west, affecting Native Americans, exploration of. [Some vets settled in the West]

Why the North won

Why the South lost

Women during and after

ZOOLOGY. How might the zoologist's perspective modify our knowledge of the role of animals in the war?