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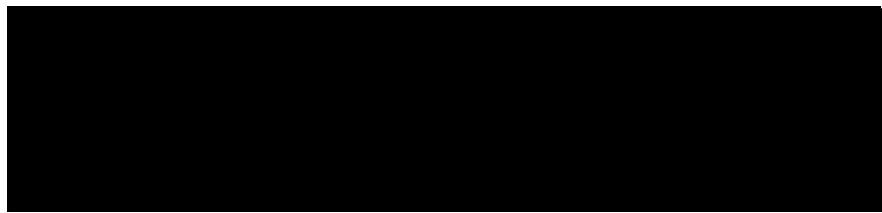
Confederate Reckoning

Power and Politics in the Civil War South

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It all began in South Carolina, precisely as the proslavery advocates of Southern nationalism had long planned. South Carolina seceded from the United States of America on December 20, 1860. It was the first state to do so. It seceded in grand style, passing a resolution dissolving the Union by lunchtime on the first day of the state convention—unanimously and without debate. The roll recorded 159 Yeas and 0 Nays. Three days later the official ordinance of secession was reported out of committee, voted up unanimously again, this time to an even heftier 169 to 0. Five minutes later, copies of the ordinance were out on the Charleston streets, published as an extra by the leading city daily, the *Charleston Mercury*, and the state's delegation to Congress had been telegraphed; by dinnertime that day the men in Washington had resigned. New flags were run up the flagpoles in Charleston and immediately the *Mercury* began to report on proceedings in Washington under the heading "Foreign News." By 7 p.m. on the evening of December 20, before a public assembly of three thousand people, the ordinance of secession was signed and sealed and South Carolina was officially declared "an Independent Commonwealth." "We are out alone," as the diarist and senator's wife, Mary Chesnut, put it.⁵

Predictably the leaders of the state campaign preened, about their historical accomplishment in general and the degree of popular unity in particular. "Virtually an unanimous resolution . . . carried us out high and dry," the delegate John S. Palmer rejoiced to his wife from the convention two days after the initial resolution was voted up. "Today it is hoped we shall get the old Lady South Carolina out of the crowd without damaging her hoops or tearing her dress." The politicians credited the people. "The people have with unexampled unanimity resolved to secede and to dare any consequences that might follow their act," John Berkley Grimball, another planter delegate wrote in his diary. "It is a complete land-sturm, a general rising of the people," the novelist and nationalist William Gilmore Simms crowed.⁶ It was indeed a remarkable accomplishment.

South Carolina was the secessionists' dream scenario. But not only was the South Carolina script not easily replicated, the secession campaign there was far more interesting than the vote would suggest—and more telling of the stresses felt in every state that attempted to do the same thing. South Carolina did present uniquely suitable conditions for a popular secession movement. In the state where the ideological and political defense of slavery had been assiduously nurtured since the origin of the republic, fire-eaters really did hold sway by the fall of 1860. Slaveholding and plantation agriculture covered every corner of the state except for a small mountain region; there was a complete absence of two-party competition; planters were systematically overrepresented; and the legislature and its caucuses arrogated political power to themselves.⁷

But even under such ideal conditions, a deep worry about the loyalty of "the people" or "the democracy" drove secessionists' strategy. Planters were blunt about their intentions in secession. "All are united now with few exceptions in the belief that now a stand must be made for African slavery or it's forever lost," the planter William Grimball wrote to his sister just before the convention. But to unite the planter class behind secession as a means to perpetuate slavery was not enough. Even in South Carolina it had to be sold to yeoman and poor white voters who were, after all, the majority of the electorate. Like their counterparts everywhere, fire-eaters worried about what might happen when the people and especially the nonslaveholders were allowed to vote. Even that eminently powerful political elite had to have an electoral strategy, and so there, as elsewhere, they schemed: about how to delimit the popular vote, and how to win it.⁸ South Carolina was the exception that proved the rule.

In South Carolina as elsewhere, one of the main tasks facing Southern nationalists was to manage the challenge issuing from nonslaveholding voters. Carolina's planter politicians had long faced the necessity of courting the people and found it distasteful. "Bumpkin after . . . Bumpkin on my hands as usual," whined U.S. Senator James Henry Hammond while at home at Redcliffe in 1858. His correspondent and colleague, Congressman William Porcher Miles, had to be reminded not to neglect his constituents even when he was up for reelection: "I know that you despise all this sort of thing—any attempt at . . . seeking popular favor," one of his backers told him, "but we can't have things just the way we

want them . . . in this out of joint world.” By the late antebellum period, the antidemocratic principles of slavery were in full flower, and concern about the tyranny of the majority was politics as usual in John C. Calhoun’s home state. Planters routinely denounced the general suffrage of white men as “mob-oc-racy.” Washington bequeathed us a republic, and “Mr. Jefferson swap’d it off for a ‘Democracy,’” one David Gavin railed in 1858. Like more than a few secessionists, he wished for a new Southern nation and “no general suffrage.” Politicians might rage about having to court the support of the people. But that didn’t change the necessity. David Gavin put it in his inimitable style: “The politicians must humbug the democracy or the people.”⁹ They did their level best.

Worry about nonslaveholders’ loyalty to the planters’ regime was a steady theme in South Carolina politics since at least the 1830s. It had long undergirded the resistance with which low-country planter politicians (the “chivalry,” they were called) met their upcountry peers’ demands for a more equitable system of representation. Unlike other Southern states, South Carolina apportioned representation under the federal three-fifths formula and not the “white basis” system that just counted white population. The counting of property and white population inflated the power of the low-country districts where slaves were most numerous. It was this “Carolina system” that “made us the conservative people that we are.” A “system of rotten boroughs and aristocratic incubi,” Hammond called it not uncritically.¹⁰ The issue was alive and well in 1860.

As fire-eaters readied for the big campaign of 1859 and 1860, concern about nonslaveholders hit new heights. To prevail they had to eliminate all sources of division: among political elites still divided over a national versus a separatist strategy to defend slavery; between the slaveholders and the people whose resentment of the planter stranglehold on power bubbled steadily below the surface in electoral politics. In tight races, even planter candidates would play the class card, bidding for votes by saying they stood for the “the right of the people” to elect members of the state’s electoral college, a privilege the legislature retained in South Carolina. Even fire-eaters, as radical secessionists were called, could recklessly stir up class antagonism, as a zealous minority did in 1860 when they moved to reopen the African slave trade. They presented it as a democratizing measure (more white men could buy slaves) and talked ominously

about slaveholders as “an aristocracy of possession” and the dangers to the institution posed by the “twenty to one” who owned no slaves. All of these tactics were bids for the nonslaveholders’ vote. But nothing caused more of a popular uproar than the law passed in 1857 to toughen penalties for white men caught trading (illegally) with slaves, making a second conviction punishable by whipping. “This is all the people seem to care about,” one worried observer wrote, that white men not be whipped like slaves. The radical elite were apoplectic about the damage to the cause, worrying openly about how all such issues were “calculated to widen the breach between the slaveholder and non-slaveholder and do no practical good.”¹¹

It was precisely those kind of dangerous divisions that fire-eaters, like their counterparts elsewhere, had to contend with in the elections of 1860. As fire-eaters formulated their strategy for the secession campaigns, the state’s nonslaveholding majority were a powerful spectral presence. Daniel Hamilton, the U.S. marshal for Charleston, put the matter bluntly in private correspondence to Congressman William Porcher Miles. “Mark what I tell you,” he wrote Miles, “when the battle comes in earnest, when talking is at an end and we find ourselves fairly embarked on a contest which will shake the world, you will find an element of great weakness in our own non-slaveholding population.” It was a grave mistake to have brought the contest “upon the question of slavery” to a government controlled by a popular majority. “Think you that 360,000 slaveholders, will dictate terms for 3,000,000 of non-slaveholders at the South.—I fear not, I mistrust our own people more than I fear all the efforts of the abolitionists.” Hamilton’s fear that secession had been staked out on the wrong ground found powerful echo in the Upper South, a place he clearly—unlike most of his peers—already had in mind. In North Carolina, C. B. Harrison, fretting about how to carry the masses, declared that “secession in favor of slavery alone won’t do.” In December 1860 he eerily predicted that secessionists would prevail only when the doctrine of federal force was introduced and the issue changed from slavery “to popular liberty.”¹² Such anxiety about the plain folk was not often openly acknowledged in South Carolina, but Hamilton’s view of nonslaveholders as the weakest link figured centrally in fire-eaters’ aggressive propaganda campaign and electoral strategy in the critical fall of 1860.

Nowhere in the South had secession been pursued as long or as pur-

posefully as in South Carolina. Fire-eaters had made their first attempt in 1851, failing to unite even their own state and suffering a sound defeat in the yeoman-majority upcountry. That failure certainly suggested a wariness about radical action among the great mass of citizens that loomed large on the second try.¹³ In 1860, reluctant to risk isolation again, they tried to get Virginia to take the lead, calculating that the alarm raised by radical abolitionist John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in October 1859 made it a safe bet; then they tried to talk some other Lower South state into it.¹⁴ When those tactics failed they prepared themselves for another try, this time making a fetish of unity within their own state.

A large part of the fire-eaters' strategy in 1860 involved the destruction of the national Democratic Party—and its powerful contingent of moderates in the state—as a viable vehicle for protecting slavery in the Union. When the party collapsed, finally (and fittingly) in Charleston at the 1860 national convention, the last institutional alternative to a secessionist and Southern nationalist political party was eliminated. “So far, so good,” Robert Barnwell Rhett telegraphed William Porcher Miles from the convention. By the summer of 1860, the vast majority of the state's planter politicians, including the powerful leader of the National Democratic faction, James L. Orr, were on board for secession, and together the old moderates and the longtime “ultras” turned to the last task—to bring “the people” up to the mark.¹⁵

At the center of their strategy was a highly orchestrated effort to appeal directly to nonslaveholders by casting the decision over secession as one in which their future (and not just that of the planters) was at stake. To that end, old moderates-turned-fire-eaters built their own propaganda machine, an organization called the “1860 Association,” formed in September 1860 by the Charleston merchant, Robert Gourdin, and a handful of men from the wealthiest planter families in the low country. They were a propaganda group functioning as a revolutionary club. The purpose, they boldly announced, was to prepare the South in the event of the “accession of Mr Lincoln and the Republican Party to power,” and, specifically, to prepare, print, and distribute tracts and pamphlets “designed to awaken” the people of the slave states to a conviction of their danger and to urge the necessity of resisting Northern and federal aggression. The 1860 Association aimed, that is, to unify the public opinion of the state

and the South behind secession as the proper response to the election of a “Black Republican” president.¹⁶ By the fall of 1860 every newspaper in the state, including the traditionally moderate *Charleston Courier* had fallen in line. The Association published and distributed all over the South some 166,000 pamphlets, all within the few months surrounding the presidential election. Tellingly enough, they specifically commissioned a pamphlet on the problem of the nonslaveholding voter.

Tract No. 5, James D. DeBow's *The Interest in Slavery of the Southern Nonslaveholder*, met the challenge head-on, offering an aggressive argument about how nonslaveholders “were even more deeply interested than any other in the maintenance of our institutions and in the success of the movement now inaugurated . . . [for] the political independence of the South.” The value and dignity of white men's labor in a slave society formed the crux of DeBow's appeal: “No white man at the South serves another as a body servant, to clean his boots, wait on his table, and perform the menial services of his household. His blood revolts against this and his necessities would never drive him to it.” But just for good measure he finished with a threat, offering a dystopian image of the post-emancipation South as a scene of sexual and racial degradation that the rich white man would escape by emigration, but that nonslaveholders and their families would have to endure. DeBow's pamphlet was a virtual handbook for politicians and editors crafting the populist appeal, and it was recycled heavily through the fall of 1860 in local newspapers and speeches.¹⁷

In South Carolina there were two critical elections, the first in October for state legislators (the men who would decide whether to hold a secession convention) and the second in December for the election of delegates to the secession convention. In the days immediately preceding both, appeals to nonslaveholders were ratcheted up. Planter politicians, driven out to make the case to yeoman farmers and poor white men at muster fields, on courthouse steps, and in local country stores, addressed them ostentatiously as “freemen,” stressed the “deep and vital interests” of every man, nonslaveholder as well as slaveholder, urged them to fight for self-protection and invariably called out some version of the question: “Are you afraid? Will you adopt the posture of submission?” In a speech to the Edisto Island Vigilant Association in October 1860, John

Townsend, a very wealthy Colleton planter and one of the converted National Democrats, pointedly asked his audience, "Where are the white nonslaveholders of Hayti?" before proceeding to conjure the poor whites' future of racial war, murder, poison, rape, and ultimately "extermination . . . or amalgamation" under a Black Republican regime.¹⁸

If it sounds sexual, it was. Here, as in so many other cases before and after, the political impulse was to use the violation of women and the home to drum up support for war. Secessionists had their own form of atrocity propaganda, and it included the same emphasis on the brutality of the enemy and the safety of women and the family advanced by modern liberal regimes like Britain in justifying war against Germany in World War One by reference to the rape of Belgium. In the majority-black districts of the South Carolina low country, the potent and linked racial and sexual threat posed to yeoman households by Lincoln's election was routinely advanced as sufficient cause for secession. It was in this context that propagandists like DeBow and Townsend strategically evoked the rape and murder of vulnerable women at the hands of black and Black Republican beasts. The only question, according to planter politicians, was: "Whether we should live as slaves or as freemen." For that reason Townsend declared that there were no people in the South who "abhor Abolitionists more than the non-slaveholders or who are more ready to resist their machinations." They "[are] one in sympathy, interest and feelings. They have equal rights, and privileges—one fate."¹⁹ In the end, it was not the slaveholders' regime but the freemen's that secessionists declared at risk of invasion. Declarations of nonslaveholders' loyalty were a dead giveaway that politicians couldn't count on it in the fall of 1860.

The unity of the body politic to which fire-eaters aspired was pursued through strategies that combined popular political mobilization and tight (some said "oligarchic") control of the electoral process. The former, of course, was necessary to get out the vote. In that effort South Carolina's radical clique proved themselves adept, innovative, and entirely unscrupulous. The centerpiece of the strategy was a highly centralized campaign to draw yeoman and poor white voters into their networks through paramilitary organizations created for the purpose. Onto the established military system of beat districts, which organized all male citizens into state

militia units and slave patrols, they grafted a network of explicitly secessionist vigilant and Minute Men associations, armed organizations of local "freemen." It was tactically brilliant. Militia districts had long provided the structure of local politics in South Carolina—muster fields were every rural man's political hall—and militia units had nurtured many of the personal loyalties and associations on which candidates counted. But along with providing immediate access to every yeoman farmer and poor white voter in the state, the new associations meant planter politicians approached them in their identity as citizen-soldiers, astutely harnessing white men's common privilege as arms-bearing citizens (in a world of slaves) to their own secessionist ends.²⁰ So even as Southern congressmen packed pistols inside their coats on the floor of the U.S. Senate and walked the halls of Congress in imminent anticipation of gunplay, ordinary citizens at home prepared for the confrontation over Lincoln's election by turning their neighborhoods into armed camps.²¹

Violence was politics as usual in 1860, the fire-eaters' electoral strategy a paramilitary one. Vigilant committees, like the one John Townsend addressed in Edisto, were organized at public meetings called by the local elite. The initial justification was the alarm raised by Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. But by the spring of 1860, vigilant committees and Minute Men associations could be found in every parish and district in the state. Founded ostensibly to "guard and protect the safety of our homes," they elected committees of vigilantes to police the community, punishing not just slaves and strangers but, as one association's bylaws put it, "persons not strangers or now residents." Like the other groups of men empowered to accuse, harass, brutally beat, whip, shave, tar and feather, run out of town on a rail, and lynch, these forces contributed greatly to the state of imminent danger they were ostensibly formed to allay. Vigilantes in their very existence dramatized the dangers of invasion about which poor white and yeoman voters had been warned. "I am for trusting no one here on earth but ourselves," "Vigilance" proclaimed in the *Charleston Mercury* in November 1859. So fearsome were the committees throughout the countryside that some elites (including those who initiated them) tried to shut them down, fearing that too much control had gone to the lesser sorts. "We are under a reign of terror and the public mind exists in a panic," the planter William Campbell Preston admitted. Not for noth-

ing did the leading abolitionist publisher William Lloyd Garrison write about "The New Reign of Terror in the Slaveholding States."²²

But the political utility of the vigilant committees was indisputable precisely because of their success in drawing the state's yeoman farmers and poor whites into participation in the fire-eaters' campaign. When the "citizens" of St. Peter's Parish in the rural low country near Beaufort responded to the call for a meeting at a country store in January 1860 to form a committee, two local leaders, a minister and a militia captain, gave the speeches, but more than half of the "gentlemen" elected to the committee were yeoman farmers. And when they rode out to discipline their unreliable or heterodox neighbors, it was yeoman farmers who led.²³

Using the traditional form of the militia beat company, fire-eaters managed to build a massive political network. The Minute Men companies represented, if anything, a more overt bid for the nonslaveholders' vote than vigilant associations. They formed, tellingly enough, on October 3, the very eve of legislative elections in the state. Their political purpose was acknowledged in the original Constitution drawn up in Columbia by Robert Barnwell Rhett and James Hopkins Adams. In it, every district in the state was called on to prepare for immediate resistance to the election of a Black Republican president by forming volunteer infantry and cavalry companies. A blue cockade would signify membership; activities would include drilling and parading day and night. In the critical last few months of 1860, companies of Minute Men shadowed political events large and small. When the newly elected state legislature met in Charleston in November to decide whether to call a secession convention, armed companies of Minute Men drilled outside the hall, issuing threatening resolutions and demanding decisive action when legislators hesitated. They also exerted a muscular presence at public meetings in the countryside to nominate delegates to the state convention in December, insisting, as in Charleston, that they would vote only for those who favored immediate separate state secession.²⁴ Their armed presence made it pretty clear that secession and consent were a lot less hazardous to the health than opposition and Unionism of any sort in the fall of 1860.

Popular mobilization was clearly not the only purpose of the various paramilitary political associations. Indeed, the paramilitary organizations worked in two ways simultaneously: as outreach, mobilizing yeoman and

poor white voters to make the fire-eaters' cause their own; and as suppression, threatening physical violence and exile to those still disposed to dissent. The newspapers were filled with accounts of the committees' bloody discipline of white men, although charges of voter intimidation surfaced only later, when it was safe to report. Four or five years before the secession elections, "men could speak their sentiments . . . freely and fought about it," one low-country resident recalled after the war. But by 1860 a man "with a public reputation for unionism . . . would not have been allowed to live here." "We had to be very quiet," Joseph Brandt, one of those Unionists, would recall. "We were too few in numbers and the secessionists were too overbearing." Slaves knew the few Union men in their area who could be trusted, but the white men and women often-times did not know one another. So frightening was the surveillance that men claimed they were afraid not to vote: the "feeling ran so high," one Beaufort farmer remembered, that he "could not abstain from voting." Because there was no Union ticket, he put a blank vote in the box. Lawrence McKenzie left his neighborhood on election day "to keep from voting," he said, "and from being annoyed by those who would vote for it and would be after [me] to do the same." "Well, Lawrence," his neighbors said when he returned, "we have today voted South Carolina out of the Union and you did not help us."²⁵

In October and December 1860, South Carolina voters went to the polls in a climate of political terror, surrounded by armed companies of men and hordes of citizens all wearing the blue cockade. The harmony of the body politic about which fire-eaters boasted was the product, in part, of that black shirt campaign. But it was as much administrative coup as open-fisted brawl. It was quite true, as more than one farmer would later charge, that voters simply "could not vote for the union" in South Carolina, that there was "no opposition ticket in this section."²⁶ The management (and constraint) of popular democracy was a matter of pride among the political elite and was key to planter politicians' insistence on restricting the number of offices put to popular election in the state. Unlike their counterparts elsewhere, South Carolina voters did not choose their governor, United States senators, state senators, many local officeholders, or, crucially, the members of the state's electoral college. In South Carolina the General Assembly arrogated that prerogative to itself.

South Carolina voters thus did not cast votes in the presidential election of 1860, and left no indication, as in other states, of pockets of dissent in blocs of votes for the Democrat Stephen Douglas, Constitutional Unionist John Bell, or as in Virginia, for Lincoln. That would have been impossible. There was no Douglas campaign organization in South Carolina, not to mention Bell or Lincoln organizations, and thus no opposition parties or opposition tickets onto which a Unionist party or faction could graft itself. The state legislators all cast their vote for Breckinridge, the extreme Southern rights candidate, as expected. The key election at which “the people’s” views would become known was not the presidential election but the October 8 election of delegates to the state legislature (charged to decide about calling a secession convention), and the December 6 election of delegates to the state secession convention thereby authorized.²⁷

For fire-eaters these elections were “the great agony.” Secessionists did everything in their power to limit the unpredictability of developments at the polls, to circumvent the democratic process by tight control of the ballot itself. Ideally they wanted to eliminate not just party contests—they had long ago done that—but opposition itself. A week or so before the October election the editor of the *Beaufort Enterprise* laid out the strategy, warning local leaders to shut down the kind of populist sideshows witnessed in recent races in the district. It was critical, he said, that gentlemen in the heat of the contest not be tempted to kowtow to the non-slaveholders and open up dangerous divisions of opinion. The key was for the districts to “call public meetings, and select such men to represent them as will render all opposition vain,” that is, to run only one candidate. South Carolina “never had impending so important an election,” he emphasized. Non-slaveholders were a problem. The solution was to not consult them. The voters must not be given any choice.²⁸

In the legislative elections in October and again in December, secessionists adopted a strategy of nominating candidates at mass public meetings where political leaders urged single “fusion” tickets to present a united front. Sometimes they failed and districts had more than one ticket or slate of candidates, thus offering a choice between those pledged to immediate secession upon Lincoln’s election and those with a stated preference to move only in cooperation with other Lower South states. Even

the fire-eaters could not control the process entirely. But the number of uncontested elections was high, more than half by some estimates. “This thing of walking around the track alone is rather dull,” one old politician wrote William Porcher Miles. Dull, but effective. The legislature returned by the October elections was “tremendously out and out secession.” And the convention delegates elected on December 10 were almost all publicly on record as supporting immediate and separate secession. As in other Lower South states (except Texas), fire-eaters made sure that the ordinance of secession was not submitted to the vote of the people. There might, indeed, have been some sentiment left for the Union. But there was no public advocacy for it, no party that represented it, and no way for ordinary voters to register dissent.²⁹ In South Carolina the vaunted harmony of the body politic registered the circumvention or preemption of the democratic process as much as, or more than, the consent of the people to secession.

Even the openly secessionist governor used his executive authority to preempt the democratic process. William Gist had been in league with the most rabid separate-state secessionists since at least August 1860. And although the formal power in his hands hardly matched that of the legislative oligarchy, he played a crucial role in one regard. By clandestine communication with other Southern governors, Gist offered assurances, as early as October, that his state would secede immediately upon Lincoln’s election and solicited their commitment to follow. More than a month before Lincoln was elected, before even his own state’s election of legislators tested the temperature of the people or the legislature called a convention to deliberate on secession, Governor Gist presented secession in South Carolina as a *fait accompli*. Operating without any mandate from “the people,” Democratic governors thus colluded on secession to make it happen. Such executive assumption was critical in all of the Deep South states (or those, unlike Texas, with Democratic Party governors) but especially in South Carolina, where the only resistance that remained to out-and-out secession was offered by men who called themselves cooperationists. With the requisite assurances from governors of Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia in hand, Gist met the incoming legislature with the message that “the long awaited cooperation was near at hand.”

Adeptly undercutting the forces of opposition and delay in the legislature, he recast a risky decision for separate state secession as the much safer cooperative venture the moderates sought.³⁰

But even in South Carolina, even after all the violence, collusion, and suppression of public debate, unity eluded the fire-eaters. When the first vote was taken in the legislature on the question of holding a secession convention at the earliest possible date (with elections scheduled for December 6)—meaning that the state would make its decision before any other Southern state—fourteen upcountry legislators balked. Not a powerful opposition, to be sure, but it took guts nonetheless. Failing even in South Carolina to achieve perfect unity, secessionists turned to fabricating it instead, insisting on a revote to get the unanimous decision for a secession convention that went down in the books: 117 Yeas and 0 Nays.³¹ Not for the last time in the secession crisis was “harmony” on display as a method of enforcing internal discipline. In the clandestine use of his executive power, Governor Gist vanquished what was left of the moderates within the state’s political leadership, leaving the fire-eaters’ in full command of the field.

“The Tea has been thrown overboard, the revolution of 1860 has been initiated,” the *Charleston Mercury* roared in delight when news of Lincoln’s election reached South Carolina on November 5. As the voters went to the polls in December to elect their delegates to the secession convention, there was really very little left to decide, and even less to sustain opposition to the juggernaut of separate state secession. By that point, as the planter William Grimball put it, the “cooperation party is extinct. It has no leaders it has no voters.” With Governor Gist calling for a public day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation to give the state “one heart and one mind” in its hour of difficulty, and citizens besieged on all sides by calls for unity and assurances that other states would quickly follow their lead, white men, although in strikingly small numbers, went to the polls once again on December 6. They voted up a convention full of men, once moderate, but now virtually unified around the immediate secession of South Carolina from the Union.³²

Secession was a brilliant campaign, designed and executed to produce the consent of the governed to the degree required for the democratic legitimacy of the new Palmetto Republic. In South Carolina the unity of the

people, which is to say the voters, around secession from the Union had been accomplished. The yeomen and poor white men who cast the majority of the votes had, apparently, been convinced. It had been a major undertaking. And it took every trick in the political book to pull it off.

