

# Elliott and the Nashville Agrarians: The Warlocks of the Southern Strategy

by Stanley Ezrol

To put it very crudely, Industrialism- Capitalism is heading for the cataract. The only alternative yet is Bolshevism, which won't do, either.

Now, the Law of Thelema offers a Third Way. These last years I have been training various people to act as a Brain for the human race.

— Aleister Crowley, letter to Frank Harris, 1924<sup>1</sup>

This is the story of the Nashville Agrarians of William Yandell Elliott, the godfather of the institution officially called “Project Democracy,” whose globalization policies unite the Wall Street factions of the Democratic and Republican parties. It is a movement of declared enemies of the United States—Confederate revivalists and Ku Klux Klan cheerleaders—who have connived for three-quarters of a century to organize the Southern Strategy, described in this issue.

A group of poets, named the “Fugitives” after the magazine they had published as students at Albert W. Gore’s *alma mater*, Vanderbilt University, launched the Agrarians between 1928 and 1930. The flagship in their assault was their manifesto, *I’ll Take My Stand*, which included a joint statement of purpose, and individual essays, by each of 12 southern authors. It is today claimed as a founding document by both the Buckleyite, Gingrichite “right,” and the radical environmentalist “left” movements.

In it, the Agrarians said, “All tend to support a Southern way of life against what may be called the American or prevailing way. . . . Agrarian *versus* Industrial.”

On the role of freed slaves, William Yandell Elliott’s cousin, Frank Lawrence Owlsey, wrote in that manifesto, “For ten years the South, already ruined by the loss of nearly \$2,000,000,000 invested in slaves . . . was turned over to the 3 millions of former slaves, some of whom could still remember the taste of human flesh and the bulk of them hardly three generations from cannibalism.”<sup>2</sup>

And Elliott’s other cousin, Agrarian Andrew Nelson Lytle, wrote in his elegy to the Klan’s first Imperial Wizard: “[The Ku Klux Klan] was the last brilliant example in Western Culture of what Feudalism could do.”<sup>3</sup>

The group’s leader, John Crowe Ransom, demanded that Platonic Christianity, and all religions defending the creative potential of man, be subverted from within, because they had made scientific and industrial progress possible in that “American or prevailing way” which the Nashville Fugitives were denouncing.

After expressing his “abhorrence” at the idea of joining an Orthodox or Roman church, or “the Synagogue,” despite his claim that they are further than his own Protestant Christianity from the Platonic Christianity he hated, Ransom concluded his book, *God Without Thunder*, with the following call to arms:

“With whatever religious institution a modern man may be connected, let him try to turn it back towards orthodoxy. . . .

“Let him restore to God the thunder.

“Let him resist the usurpation of the Godhead by the soft modern version of the Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

Between 1928 and 1935, the Agrarians published a series of books and dozens of magazine articles, and were promoted through a series of internationally publicized debates, featuring attendance by governors, university presidents, and leading literary figures.

## Tennessee Templars

How did these kids from Tennessee make such a big splash? They were already known in London as the second- and third-generation descendants of the circles, largely “Tennessee Templars,” who founded the Ku Klux Klan, to continue Britain’s “Civil War” against the United States through irregular means, after the military defeat of the Confederacy. Ransom was the great-nephew of James R. Crowe, a leader

1. John Symonds, *The Great Beast: The Life and Magick of Aleister Crowley* (London: Macdonald, 1971).

2. John Crowe Ransom, et al., *I’ll Take My Stand* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1983). For more on the Agrarians, see Stanley Ezrol, “Vanderbilt University and the Night Writers of the Ku Klux Klan,” *New Federalist*, Oct. 7, 1996, p. 7.

3. Andrew Nelson Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and His Critter Company* (New York: Minton, Balch & Co., 1931).

4. John Crowe Ransom, *God Without Thunder: An Unorthodox Defense of Orthodoxy* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1965—unaltered and unabridged reprint of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1930 edition), pp. 155-187, 327-328.



William Elliott  
Alfred Starr  
Allen Tate

Merrill Moore  
Alec Stevenson  
John Crowe Ransom

Jesse Wills

Sidney Hirsch  
Robert Penn Warren  
Donald Davidson

This photograph of the assembled Fugitives was made during the noontime recess between the morning and afternoon sessions of Friday, May 4, which were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wills, on Belle Meade Boulevard.



## FUGITIVES' REUNION

*Conversations at Vanderbilt*

May 3-5, 1956

Edited by ROB ROY PURDY

Introduction by LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR.



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*One of the books celebrating the "Nashville Agrarians," or "Fugitives," as they were known at their home base of Vanderbilt University in Tennessee; The Agrarians' pro-Confederacy manifestos became vastly influential for both "Conservative" and "left-wing" opponents of America's tradition of scientific and technological progress.*

of Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Tennessee, and one of the inner circle of Masons, along with Sovereign Grand Commander Albert Pike and Nathan Bedford Forrest, who founded the Ku Klux Klan in 1867. Ransom's mother, Ella, had fond memories of evenings spent by the fireside with the other Crowe women, sewing sheets together for Klan rallies. Stark Young's father and Cleanth Brooks's grandfather fought in Forrest's "Critter Company." William Yandell Elliott's grandfather belonged to the Masonic Lodge in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, which, in 1898, caused Federal land in the nation's capital to be set aside, for a monument to Klan founder Pike. Walter L. Fleming, the dean of Vanderbilt University from 1917 to 1930, to whom *I'll Take My Stand* was dedicated, was the author of the 1905 classic, *The Ku Klux Klan: Its Origin, Growth, and Disbandment*. This, along with Thomas Dixon's *The Klansman*, Thomas Woodrow Wilson's various histories, and the Hollywood movie *Birth of a Nation* based on them, promoted the re-founding and growth of the Klan in the Twentieth Century.

They had gone from being a discussion group led by Rosicrucian mystic Sidney Mtrron Hirsch, in 1915, to leaders of the "modernist" literary movement in the 1920s. John Crowe Ransom, William Yandell Elliott, Bill Frierson, Robert Penn Warren, and Cleanth Brooks were Rhodes Scholars; Andrew Nelson Lytle studied at Oxford; Stark Young was a lifelong intimate of top British cultural warrior Julian Huxley (whose primary foray into United States politics was as a founding faculty member of Rice University

in Houston, Texas, under the patronage of James Baker, grandfather of George W. Bush's lead attorney, James Baker the "Third").

Stark was also a leader of British spymaster H.G. Wells's *New Republic* group; Allen Tate became an intimate of Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the other expatriate literary forerunners of the "beat" and "hippie" generations. Tate coordinated the production of *I'll Take My Stand* from Paris, where, every Thursday afternoon, he and his friends enjoyed the hashish-laced hospitality of Gertrude Stein and her "wife," Alice B. Toklas. Elliott became personally close to the Rosicrucian mystic poet William Butler Yeats—the one-time lodge brother of self-proclaimed apostle of Satan, Aleister Crowley, and patron of hippie hero, and fascist propagandist, Ezra Pound.

Crowley, "The Great Beast," was a central figure in these artsy circles, and it was friends of his who planned the event which prompted the Fugitives to go Agrarian. This was the famous "Scopes Monkey Trial," of 1925, which was planned in the Virginia home of James Branch Cabell, by two followers of the precursor of Nazi philosophy, Friedrich Nietzsche. These were the "liberal" attorney Clarence Darrow, who tried the case, and the "conservative" journalist H. L. Mencken, who publicized it. Mencken, who had published Crowley's work, introduced him to Cabell, a writer of "Dungeons and Dragons"-type medieval sex fantasies. The Fugitives claimed that they were offended by Mencken's treatment of the South during and after the Trial, and launched the Agrarian move-

ment to establish Confederate cultural supremacy in the United States.

## Rejoining the Empire

William Yandell Elliott was far from being, as he might appear, the Fugitive who escaped to Harvard and went respectable. Rather, Elliott, Henry Kissinger's mentor, was perhaps the nuttiest fruit in the cake. While most of his fellows, in later years, poked respectful fun at their early mentor, Sidney Hirsch, he, at the Rockefeller Foundation-funded 1956 "Fugitives' Reunion," then serving on Dwight Eisenhower's National Security Council, said of Hirsch, "The insights that he had about the struggle of myths and systems, and the nature of the struggle of the people who became the epic exemplars, was superior in its political insight to any figure I've known." In unpublished tape-recorded remarks to that gathering, Elliott reports having escorted Hirsch from his home to the Vanderbilt campus. Eyewitnesses report that in that period, Hirsch's home, which Elliott visited, featured occult artifacts, a life-size nude portrait of Hirsch, and human pelvis bones hanging from the ceiling, which Hirsch would caress as he engaged in conversation.

Elliott's life-long mission was to reorganize the United States as a section of a new, global British Empire run by business and other leaders, regardless of whom the people might elect, as demanded in his 1935 book, *The Need for Constitutional Reform: A Program for National Security*.

Five years, later, in 1940, he was a leader of a group called the Committee of Fifteen, or the Committee on Europe, including a number of recently defected Fascists, which demanded that the United States enter World War II, for the sole purpose of establishing a global dictatorship, a forerunner to today's Project Democracy. His collaborators included Agrarian Herbert Agar; Alvin Johnson, a founder of both the *New Republic* and the associated New School for Social Research; one-worldist theologian Reinhold Niebuhr; Mark Twain's biographer Van Wyck Brooks; environmentalist god-father Lewis Mumford; Frankfurt School novelist Thomas Mann; and Mann's son-in-law, G.A. Borgese.

Mann's daughter, and Borgese's wife, Elisabeth, went on to become a leader of the elite, environmentalist nut group, the Club of Rome, and a prominent official of the United Nations, which is responsible for the "systems analysis"-based predictions so heavily relied on by the likes of Jimmy Carter and Al Gore. They named Ransom's tyrant "God of Thunder" as "Democracy," and demanded that the planet submit to its will through only one religion, one government, one law enforcement agency, and one educational system:

"England, where modern man first rose to his dignity, still holds out in tragic valor. . . .

"But it remains for all men of good will to make the interval of preparation as short as possible, until the day comes when the heresy of nationalism is conquered. . . . Then . . .

there will be a Universal Parliament . . . , an elected president, the President of Mankind — , and a federal force ready to strike at anarchy and felony. . . .

" . . . Wilson's 'program of the world's peace' cannot be enforced . . . with judges but no sheriffs. . . . Therefore, . . . universal law [must be] enforced on the rebels, finally to become the common peace and freedom of all the peoples of the earth."<sup>5</sup>

After the war, Elliott, along with his favorite, Henry Kissinger, edited Harvard's textbook, *Western Political Heritage*. There he argued for a world government which would prevent industrialization, as the only way to prevent nuclear war. His post-war government career centered on various calls to reinvent government as a satrap of the global empire.

## The Nashville Agrarians Today

Thus, the Agrarians propagated Albert Gore's radical environmentalist hatred of technology, and the Bush camp's fundamentalism, as well as the global British Empire policies supported by both. The Fugitives/Agrarians came to dominate the American Literary scene, as typified by President Ronald Reagan's appointment of Robert Penn Warren to be the first "Poet Laureate of the United States," in 1986.

The intellectual leaders of today's Conservative movement—including Russell Kirk of the Heritage Foundation, the Rockford Institute, and other think-tanks, and Melvin E. Bradford, of the University of Dallas, both of whom studied directly under Agrarian Donald Davidson, and Kirk's protégé and successor, Thomas Fleming (now editor of Rockford's journal, the *Chronicles*, and a founder of the Southern League)—claim the Agrarians as their mentors. In 1979, they, along with F. Reid Buckley and others, launched an openly pro-Confederate, pro-Ku Klux Klan magazine, *The Southern Partisan*, with the support of well-known political figures including Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.), who have provided it with cordial interviews. Oddly, *Southern Partisan* was also supported by Agrarian Cleanth Brooks, a life-long Democrat who supported William Clinton's 1992 Presidential campaign, and Eugene Genovese, the prominent Marxist theorist who provided ammunition for the Agrarians' argument that industrial capitalism is more oppressive than slavery. Agrarians have since founded the Southern League, and its magazine, *The Southern Patriot*.

In Al Gore's Tennessee, the Agrarians, and what one official of Tennessee's Historical Society called "their damned cult of Nathan Bedford Forrest," are considered as a state treasure. A native of Nashville told this writer that the Tennessee school system focussed its Civil War history curriculum

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5. *The City of Man: A Declaration of World Democracy* (New York: Viking Press, and The MacMillan Co., Canada, 1941). See also, Stanley Ezrol, "William Yandell Elliott: Confederate High Priest," *EIR*, Dec. 5, 1997.

in the 1970s on Forrest, just as the Historical Society featured him in its museum displays. In 1979, when a bust of Forrest was unveiled in the state capital, four Klansmen in full regalia were in attendance. In 1981, Democratic Governor John Y. Brown provided his airplane, to fly Agrarian Robert Penn Warren to Nashville for the 50th anniversary celebration of *I'll Take My Stand*. Warren, known as a liberal supporter of the Civil Rights movement, had, the previous year, published an appreciation of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, on the occasion of the posthumous restitution of the arch-traitor's citizenship by environmentalist Democratic President Jimmy Carter. There is no record of any protest of these events by the Democratic Congressman and later Senator from the jurisdiction, Albert W. Gore, Jr. In fact, Gore has made a point of emphasizing not only the environmentalist, anti-technology fanaticism which he shares with the Agrarians, but his roots in the ante-bellum South.

So, we have two Confederate factions competing to wreck the American Republic, and Wall Street proposes that the conflict be resolved by uniting the two in the new Bush Administration. Therefore, our future depends on LaRouche and those who join him in defense of the General Welfare.

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## Democratic Leadership Council

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# Triangulation Versus The 'General Welfare'

by Scott Thompson

Immediately following the landslide defeat of Jimmy Carter in 1980, the *grande dame* of the Anglo-American salon circuit, Pamela Churchill Harriman, began the Southern Strategy's next step for reduction of the Democratic Party into what Sen. Edward Kennedy would denounce 15 years later, as "a second Republican Party." She began to gather under her very influential skirts a collection of up-and-coming Southern Democratic politicians, with the idea of bankrolling them to take over and transform the party. The first incarnation of Harriman's work was "Democrats for the '80s," which often gathered at Harriman's Northern Virginia "Hunt Country" estate.

The group was headed by a former Jimmy Carter staffer, Al From. In 1985, Harriman's money and From's efforts changed the "Democrats for the '80s" into the Democratic Leadership Council. In various policy declarations, the DLC

announced that its mission was to get rid of the traditional FDR-era Democratic Party orientation toward minorities, trade unionists, farmers, and small entrepreneurs, and to turn the Democratic Party "upscale."

The DLC and its think-tank, the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI), explicitly adopted the mantra of "Third Way," entering into competition with the GOP for the hearts and minds of upper-middle-class strata. They claimed the Democrats could forget the 70-80% of the population who had looked to the Democratic Party since the time of Franklin Roosevelt, for representation and protection, as the GOP increasingly assailed their welfare. These people, said the DLC leaders, if they continued voting at all, would automatically vote Democrat, no matter what the party did.

The DLC/PPI symbolized the Democratic Party's own enthusiastic adoption of the very same "Southern Strategy" that turned the party of Abraham Lincoln into the party of states' rights, segregation, and racism in all of its other manifestations.

### The 'Third Way'

On its website, the "New Democrats" of the DLC describe their "Third Way" in the following psycho-babble terms: "The Third Way is a global movement dedicated to modernizing progressive politics for the Information Age. Equally rejecting the stale doctrines of the left and right, Third Way politics seeks a new balance of economic dynamism . . . a new social compact based on individual rights and responsibilities and a new model for governing that equips citizens and communities to solve their own problems."

What this means in practice, is that the DLC has followed the "triangulation" policies of former Clinton adviser "Dirty Dick" Morris and Al Gore, Jr. (the latter a DLC member), to rip up the Constitution's General Welfare clause, through such means as "welfare to work" and "fiscal responsibility" and the "balanced budget." On July 1, 1993, From and PPI head Will Marshall wrote: "Dick Morris, the President's latest political adviser, calls this strategy 'triangulation,' that means running to a third point—against both Republican and Democratic orthodoxy. Since Democrats, almost by definition, run against Republican orthodoxy, what makes triangulation different is that it resists Democratic orthodoxy as well."

Former Clinton Administration Secretary of Labor Robert Reich gave an apt description of the DLC's policy, when he denounced Al Gore's economic policies as worse than those of Herbert Hoover and Calvin Coolidge—the two Republican Presidents who helped trigger the Great Depression with their "balanced budget" and shareholder values policies.

DLC President Al From got started in politics as President Jimmy Carter's deputy adviser on inflation, during the