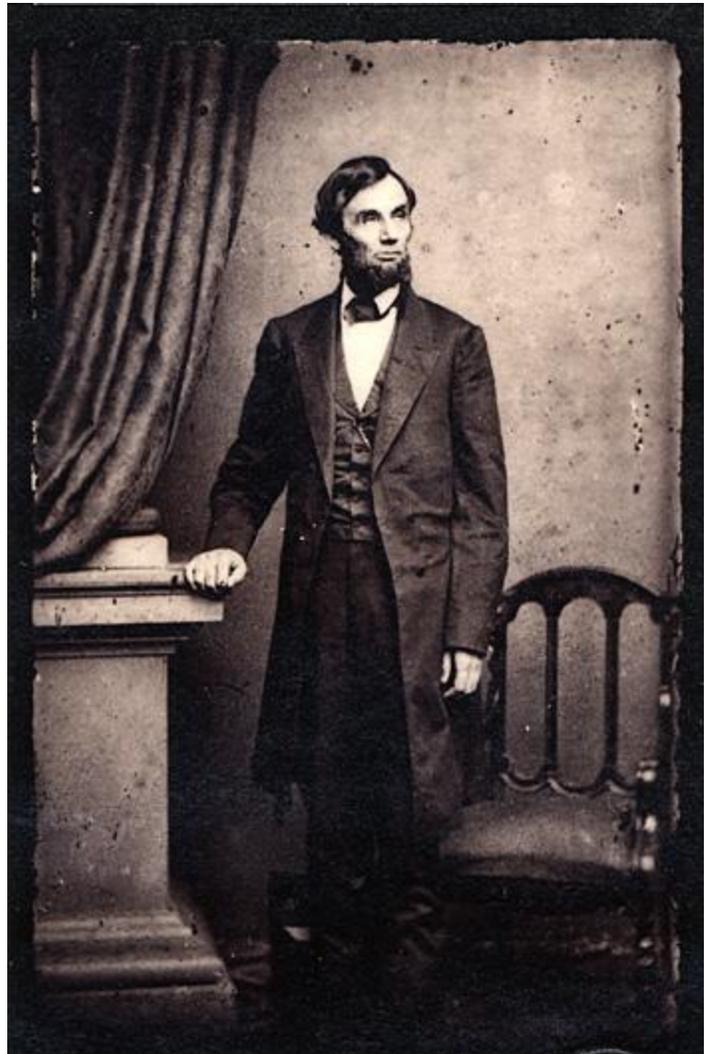


Book Review: The Real Lincoln

Democracy in the United States has become a paradox. On one hand our society seems to believe that any citizen (not just white, male property-owners anymore) over 18 is qualified to vote. On the other hand the elected representatives govern us like we are too stupid to make our own decisions. We aren't deemed competent enough to save for disaster or old age, so we are forced to give up 15.3% of the first \$110,700 that we make to Social Security OASDI/Medicare. Why can't I choose how much I save and where it goes? The list of things that Big Brother has declared me too incompetent for continues to grow. In 2010, I learned that I am no longer capable of analyzing whether I should have a health insurance. In much of the country, you can't even purchase raw milk anymore.

Our "Representatives" even create rules on how we should go to the bathroom and bathe. The EPA of 1992 limited toilets to a 1.6 gallon flush and a maximum of 2.5 gallons per minute flow for shower heads.¹ In Dallas, it is even illegal to hire a non-licensed plumber to install your hot water heater. After installed, a city inspector must come out during business hours to make sure the licensed plumber knew what he was doing. (Thank you once again, Sheryl, for not showing up on the day you said you would and leaving a fine on my door when I wasn't home for your unscheduled visit.) I even got a \$25 ticket for parking the "wrong way" in front of my own house on a lazy street last year!

From public schools to our broken court system to the electoral college--our system is broken or so corrupted that we need to hit the reset button and start over. If



Dictator Lincoln? Photo taken April 17, 1863 by Thomas Le Mere

¹ <http://mises.org/daily/2007>

citizens are incapable of deciding whether to try a drug they have researched, use free market interest rates, and freely choose their own currency, then why do the powers that be let them vote at all? Has the government/corporate state grown so big that (s)elections are only a chimera to make us think that we are still free people when in reality, we are only "voting" for the next "front-man" to the Kleptocracy?

How did we get so far from the Constitution? According to Tom DiLorenzo, author of *The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War*, Honest Abe helped create the blueprint for the centralized government and the desecration of civil rights in the United States. Fellow central-planner, Karl Marx, wrote Lincoln in 1864 "We congratulate the American people upon your reelection by a large majority." Let's take a look at some of the main themes of DiLorenzo's book.

Lincoln was a racist

DiLorenzo writes "It was not to end slavery that Lincoln initiated an invasion of the South. He stated over and over again that his main purpose was to "save the Union" which is another way of saying that he wanted to abolish states' rights once and for all...A war was not necessary to free the slaves, but it was necessary to destroy the most significant check on the powers of the central government: the right of secession."²

He then has some shocking quotes that never showed up in *my* history text book. In 1858, Lincoln said:

I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary.³

He also said that he never had been "in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people."⁴ He did have a master plan for black people. Before the Civil War he said, "Send them [blacks] to Liberia, to their own native land." Once president, he held a meeting with freed black leaders to convince them to create a plan to move all black people back to Africa, Haiti, and Central America.⁵ In 1862, when Washington D.C. ended slavery, it approved \$600,000 to send free black slaves back to Africa.⁶

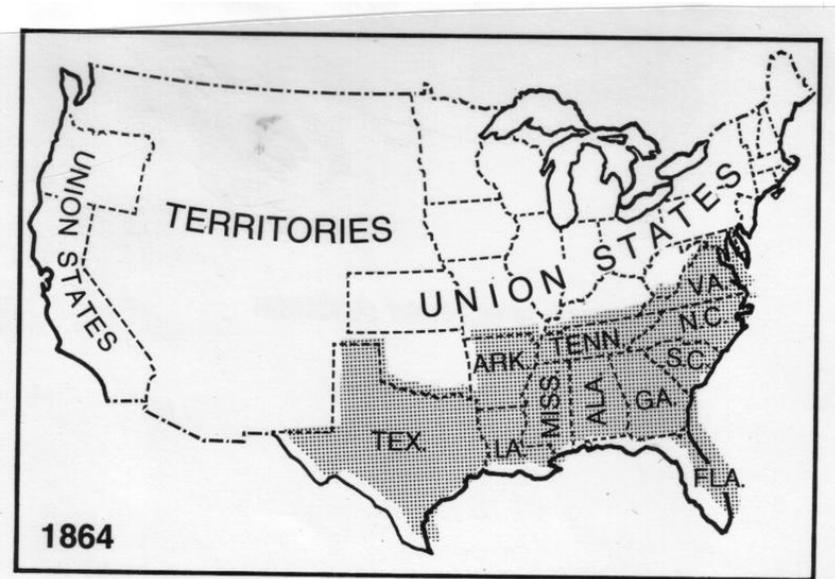
² DiLorenzo, Thomas J. *The Real Lincoln: a New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War* (NY, NY: Three Rivers Press, 2002),8.

³ Ibid., 8.

⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵ Ibid., 17.

⁶ Ibid., 18.



The Confederate States in 1864. Source: Pearson Scott Foresman

A true hero and authentic abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison said "President Lincoln may colonize himself if he choose, but it is an impertinent act, on his part, to propose the getting rid of those who are as good as himself." Garrison concluded Lincoln "had not a drop of anti-slavery blood in his veins."⁷ DiLorenzo then goes on to give many examples of how poorly blacks were viewed in the North. In many areas they couldn't vote,

legally marry, utilize the judicial system, be union members, send their children to public schools, or testify against white people.⁸

The Real Lincoln also quotes Alexis de Tocqueville from *Democracy in America*, "the prejudice of race appears to be stronger in the states that have abolished slavery than in those where it still exists; and nowhere is it so intolerant as in those states where servitude has never been known."⁹ I found this quote to be compelling because Tocqueville was a French Lawyer who came to the United States to report on our experiment with democracy. The author makes a strong case that Lincoln as well as most Northerners were also racist and did not start the Civil War out of compassion for slaves as we learned in elementary school.

The Civil War was about a lot more than slavery

Lincoln was elected with less than 40% of the popular vote and not one Southern state voted for him. They voted Democrat because they felt that Lincoln and the entire Republican party were in the pocket of Northern manufacturers. Although there wasn't slavery in the North, Northern whites were racist and few were abolitionists. Using Lincoln's quotes, DiLorenzo paints the war as a power grab for centralized government. He quotes a letter Lincoln wrote in 1862:

My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps save the Union...¹⁰

⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁸ Ibid., 26-27.

⁹ Ibid., 25.

¹⁰ Ibid., 35.

DiLorenzo makes Lincoln out to be a puppet of Northern business, a Mercantilist, and central-planner. In the mid 1800s, the economies of the North and South were radically different. The Southern economy was almost all agricultural (mostly cotton) and the North was the country's manufacturing base. The only way the federal government (which Lincoln wanted bigger) could get more money was to increase import taxes. The South exported their crops around the world and paid a much larger proportion of the nation's taxes and felt like the tax revenue was unequally being spent in the North.

Lincoln's mentor, Henry Clay, helped pass a tariff increase in 1828 that was later nicknamed the "Tariff of Abominations."¹¹ In 1861 the Morrill Tariff was passed and this brought even more tension between the North and South.¹² A December 10, 1860 *Daily Chicago Times* article exposes the Republican game:

The South has furnished near three-fourths of the entire exports of the country. Last year she furnished seventy-two percent of the whole...we have a tariff that protects our manufacturers from thirty to fifty percent, and enables us to consume large quantities of Southern cotton, and to compete in our whole home market with the skilled labor of Europe. This operates to compel the South to pay an indirect bounty to our skilled labor, of millions annually.¹³

I can see how the Democrats and the South felt like they were not being represented in this arrangement. DiLorenzo's detailed description of Lincoln's former Whig party was also enough to convince me that he was in big business' pocket and was a Mercantilist. Lincoln also signed the Legal Tender Act in 1862, creating fiat money known as "Greenbacks" that were printed with abandon to help finance the war and destroyed many people's wealth.¹⁴

The Emancipation Proclamation was purposefully worded to be ineffective

I had come across some of the racist quotes before, but this was the most unexpected thing I read in the book. DiLorenzo makes the case that Lincoln miscalculated how long a war would last and was not winning as expected. The Emancipation Proclamation was an act not of hatred of slavery, but of desperation to win the war. DiLorenzo states:

The Emancipation Proclamation applied only to *rebel* territory, even though at the time Federal armies occupied large parts of the South, including much of Tennessee and Virginia, where it would have been possible to emancipate thousands of slaves. Specifically exempted by name in the Proclamation were the federally occupied states of Maryland and Kentucky, as well as West Virginia and many counties of Virginia. The Federal army also occupied much of Louisiana at the time, and those areas were exempted as well...Lincoln, one of the nation's preeminent lawyers, was careful to craft the proclamation in a way that would guarantee that it would not emancipate any slaves.¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid., 63.

¹² Ibid., 238.

¹³ Ibid., 242.

¹⁴ Ibid., 253.

¹⁵ Ibid.,36.

Historian, James McPherson, commented on the North's reaction to the proclamation, "Plenty of soldiers believed that the proclamation had changed the purpose of the war...They professed to feel betrayed. They were willing to risk their lives for the Union, they said, but not for black freedom."¹⁶

The Real Lincoln then goes on to quote several contemporary sources including Lincoln's Secretary of State, William Seward, as saying "We show our sympathy with slavery by emancipating slaves where we cannot reach them and holding them in bondage where we can set them free."¹⁷ What really blew me away was what came after the Proclamation. Northerners became hostile to the government for its new position on slavery. In July of 1863 there were violent protests for the proclamation and new conscription laws. Many unlucky black people were randomly assaulted and killed. If you were wealthy and could pay \$300, you didn't have to fight in the war. Lincoln squashed this rebellion by sending troops in that shot between 300 to 1000 citizens.¹⁸

What? How can our government say with a straight face that Bashar al-Assad, the President of Syria and known for killing protestors, is a monster and Lincoln is a hero? It is classic doublethink from *1984*. The myths of Lincoln and others are so ingrained that in our minds that it is almost impossible to view facts for what they are.

Dictator Lincoln and his shredding of the Constitution

The Real Lincoln states:

Even though the large majority of Americans, North and South, believed in a right of secession as of 1861, upon taking office Lincoln implemented a series of unconstitutional acts including launching an invasion of the South without consulting Congress, as required by the constitution; declaring martial law; blockading the Southern ports; suspending the writ of habeas corpus for the duration of his administration; imprisoning without trial thousands of *Northern* citizens; arresting and imprisoning newspaper publishers who were critical of him; censoring all telegraph communications; nationalizing the railroads; creating several new states without the consent of the citizens of those states; ordering Federal troops to interfere with elections in the North by intimidating Democratic voters; deporting a member of Congress, Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio, for criticizing the administration's income tax proposal at a Democratic Party rally; confiscating private property; confiscating firearms in violation of the Second Amendment; and effectively gutting the Ninth and Tenth Amendments to the Constitution, among other things.¹⁹

I hope I didn't make your head explode with that. DiLorenzo did a great job of getting me to picture myself as a poor white Northerner who had family in the South. How atrocious would the idea of being conscripted into military service to fight against your own family be? What if you owned the

¹⁶ Ibid., 45.

¹⁷ Ibid., 36.

¹⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹⁹ Ibid., 132.

local newspaper and Lincoln's troops shut it down and burned it down as they did to so many. What if your pastor was locked in jail for not obeying Lincoln's dictate that he was required to pray for the President every Sunday?²⁰ It is estimated that Lincoln locked up more than 13,000 political prisoners.²¹

DiLorenzo also discusses how Lincoln was known to be very involved in military planning and must have known the war crimes that his generals were committing. Raping and pillaging, burning churches, crops and homes was very common. One of Sherman's soldier's noted "Never before have I witnessed so much wanton destruction as on this march. The soldiers are perfectly abandoned."

Most people are unaware of the carnage Lincoln did to our civil liberties. Apologists will paint him as a good man doing what he had to do within a system for the best of the world. DiLorenzo's work asks the very important question, "was an complete gutting of the Constitution worth it?" Certainly Lincoln's war freed the slaves, but the way they were freed and how they were used by the Republican party during reconstruction, kept them essentially second class citizens for 100 years. I can't help but think of the horrible precedent that Lincoln set and how far we have since strayed from the Constitution.

Was a military conflict necessary?

DiLorenzo points to several cases in his book where countries compensated slave owners to purchase the freedom of their slaves. He estimates that the costs of the war were enough to purchase freedom for every Southern slave and still have enough left over to give them each 40 acres and a mule.²² The table below shows the year eleven other countries emancipated their slaves without war. Why did 620,000 people have to die here?

Country/Region	Year of Emancipation
Argentina	1813
Columbia	1814
Chile	1823
Central America	1824
Mexico	1829
Bolivia	1831
Uruguay	1842
French and Danish Colonies	1848
Ecuador	1851
Peru	1854
Venezuela	1854

What Would have Happened if the South Seceded?

It is impossible to go back in time to see exactly how events would have played out. I wish I could go back to 2008 and have the FDIC take over all the big banks and sell them off to smaller, more prudent banks to prove Hank Paulson was wrong. Lincoln argued that if the South was allowed to

²⁰ Ibid., 138.

²¹ Ibid., 140.

²² Ibid., 275.

secede, then anarchy would break out everywhere. It could have, but in 1905 Norway seceded from Sweden with no such consequences.²³ It was equally impressive to see the Soviet Union collapse in 1989 without bloodshed.

As the table above indicates, it is safe to say that African Americans would not have stayed in bondage for very long. Who can forget the moving scenes in *Amazing Grace* depicting the struggle of William Wilberforce to abolish slavery in England in 1833?²⁴ England still had colonies in Africa and South America until the 1960s! DiLorenzo hypothesizes that the North may have stopped enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 and/or border states could have ended slavery, making it easier for Southern slaves to escape. Slavery in Brazil was abolished province by province.²⁵ Possibly William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* would have swayed public opinion one by one to make it a movement that called for a Constitutional Amendment? I could even see how foreign countries might have posed tariffs to any countries still using monstrous slave labor. Maybe the industrial revolution would have made slavery no longer profitable as the book points out?²⁶

The ONLY good thing from Lincoln's war was the freeing of the slaves. It appears from events in other countries that times and global attitudes were already changing. DiLorenzo makes the important point that 620,000 people didn't have to die (picture in your mind EIGHT Cowboys Stadiums with every person dead in their seat), much of the South didn't have to be burned to the ground, and we didn't have to permanently maim countless people to achieve this goal.²⁷

When looking at Lincoln's legacy with a critical eye, he is no longer the hero of my high school history book. What kind of Union do you have when one side is forced to be in it at gun point? Secession is merely a divorce. When one spouse is abusive to the other and will not change their domineering and destructive ways, who would force the injured spouse to stay in that Union? State secession is the final check on an overpowering federal government and Lincoln's guns started a massive chain of the destruction of liberty in the United States. On November 4, 1866 Lord Acton wrote General Robert E. Lee:

I saw in State's rights the only availing check upon the absolutism of the sovereign will, and secession filled me with hope, not as the destruction but as the redemption of Democracy. The institutions of your Republic have not exercised on the old world the salutary and liberating influence which ought to have belonged to them, by reason of those defects and abuses of principal which the Confederate Constitution was expressly and wisely calculated to remedy. I believed that the example of that great Reform would have blessed all the races of mankind by establishing true freedom purged of the native dangers and disorders of Republics. Therefore I deemed that you were fighting the battles of our liberty, our

²³ Ibid., 117.

²⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wilberforce

²⁵ Ibid., 276.

²⁶ Ibid., 277.

²⁷ Ibid., 4.

progress, and our civilization; and I mourn for the stake which was lost at Richmond more deeply than I rejoice over that which was saved at Waterloo.²⁸

A Sovereign Confederacy would absolutely have put controls on the centralization of power in the North for many years. There is no telling what freer people paying less in taxes could have accomplished. Losing the South's tax base would have forced greater competition among Northern manufacturing and there is no telling what advancements in technology could have been made faster. A peaceful secession would have kept strong decentralized governments that would have been free to experiment with different forms of governments. Possibly some states would have been very free and never passed the prohibition of Alcohol, been involved in the World Wars, or instituted an income tax. Until we invent a flux capacitor, we will not be able to go back in time to change the future. Maybe in 1870 a Treaty of Reunification would have been signed? The only thing we can know is that history does teach us that centralized command and control governments lead to the destruction of civil liberties, rule by tyrants, and the destruction of wealth. No person or committee can be smarter than free people working in their selfish interests to innovate and make their world better.

Conclusion

DiLorenzo wrote this book to dispel many of the myths about Lincoln that have become part of the public conscious. It makes our nation and its citizens feel better to think that the Civil War was fought over the moral outrage of slavery and not include the tax and states' rights issues. Reviews of this book were very polarized. People who disliked it thought it unbalanced and some called it revisionist. I wasn't expecting every possible view to be explained and knew that it was written to shatter the "Lincoln was the best President we ever had view." The Confederate government was not filled with angels and many government "servants" are corrupt. I found this book to be very interesting and well written. DiLorenzo makes some very good critiques of Lincoln's civil rights abuse and adds a great deal of color to the Civil War I had never been exposed to before.

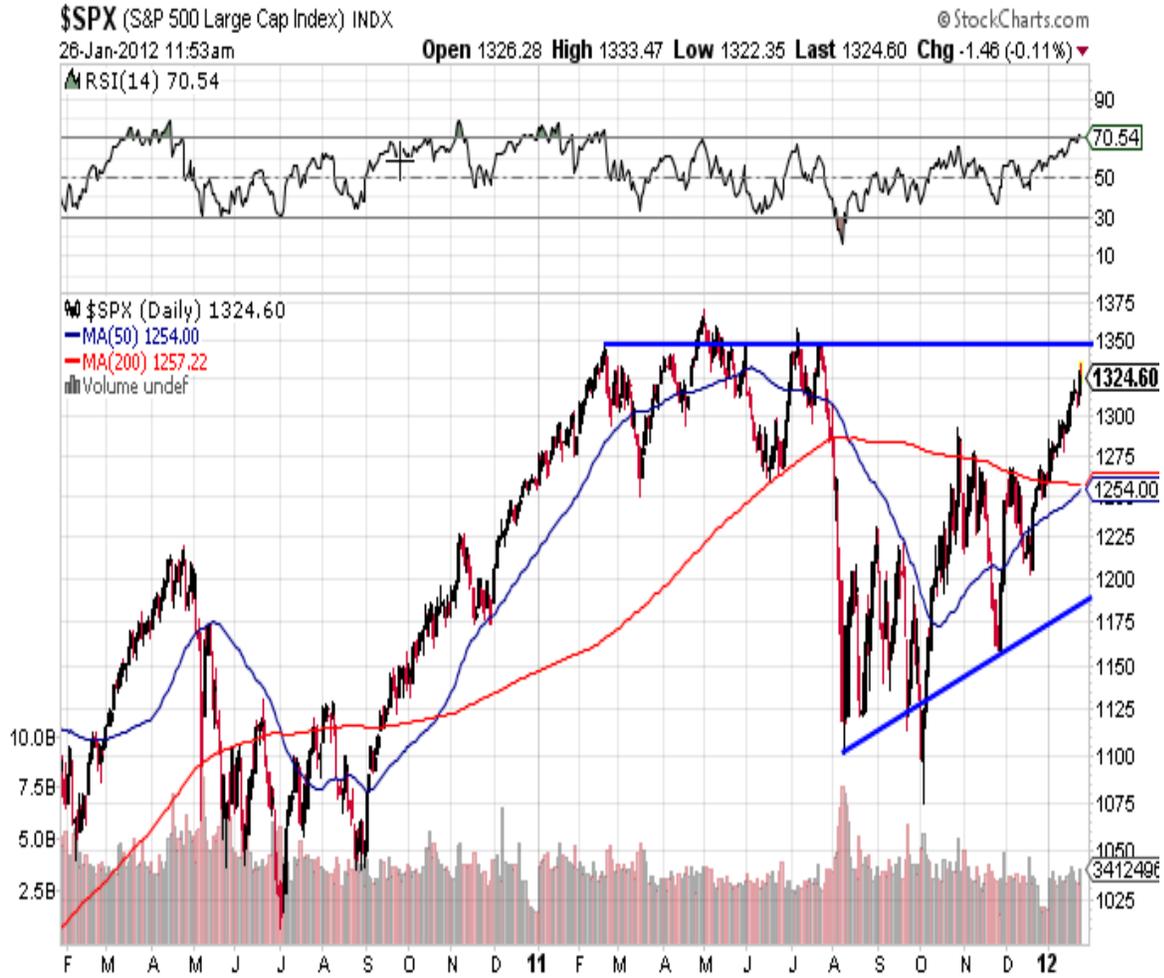
The last take away from the book is that there is no Constitution when the government feels threatened. How threatened must our current governments feel as they try to shut down freedom of speech on the internet, corral protestors into "free speech zones," and pass acts like the NDAA?

Markets

What a difference a few billion Euros can make for equity prices! Investors have gone from "Eurogeddon is directly ahead--sell everything," to the "Fed and ECB are going to print currencies to oblivion--I must chase this rally" in four short months. The swings from extreme pessimism to extreme optimism should not surprise me anymore, but they always do. It is fascinating to watch the stock market as a big thermometer to social mood. Fourth quarter earnings were good. On January 26, the Fed "shocked" the world by saying they will rob savers of their interest for an extra year and extend the policy known as ZIRP (zero interest rate policy) till late 2014. Despite Bernanke's psychotic plan to send our currency to oblivion, the stock market looks "overbought" to me as indicated by the 70.54 reading of RSI below. There is no perfect indicator, but take a look below at what happened every time you saw RSI hit 70 over the last two years. There is a

²⁸ Ibid., 268.

significant amount of selling pressure at the 1350 level on the S&P 500 and I will be very surprised if we break through that level without first seeing an overdue correction.



Courtesy of StockCharts.com



Domestique Capital LLC
4601 Old Shepard Place
Ste. 117
Plano, TX 75093
214.556.8904 phone
www.domestiquecap.com

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