The LQC Lamar Society

The LQC Lamar Society is a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational organization committed to the premise that Southerners can find practical solutions to the South's major problems. The organization is comprised of members whose common bond is a desire to see the South achieve its full potential.

The Society believes that the fulfillment of that potential has been delayed for the best part of 20 years by the pre-occupation of regional energies with the question of racial integration, rather than with other pressing problems. Such problems include rural poverty, sub-standard housing and education, unemployment, low wages and per capita income, an increasing rate of population growth, environmental pollution, and inadequate planning by state and local governments.

It can be argued that the South has had very little to say about its own destiny during the past 100 years. During Reconstruction (1865-1877) the South was still under the direct control of the federal government; indeed, during some of these years federal troops were still on the scene. Although in theory the reins of power were transferred back to the South about 1877, in practice the South remained at the mercy of northern business interests for the next 50 years.

In the thirties the region was particularly hard hit by the Depression. Survival at that time greatly depended on the New Deal. Again the major decisions affecting the South were being made by outsiders, not Southerners. And of course the story of the 1950's and 1960's is well known.

The Society is dedicated to supplanting romantic rhetoric, long the solace of our region, with pragmatic dialogue. It hopes by means of a variety of programs to facilitate the acknowledgment of problems and actively to promote their solution. Before these problems can be solved, however, a new breed of Southerner must be generated, long on imagination, innovation, and professional competence, short on political dogma. The Society hopes to spearhead such an effort.

A nineteenth century Mississippi statesman, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar numbered among his achievements service as U.S. Senator, Secretary of the Interior, and Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court—the only Mississippian to serve in the latter capacity.

His 1874 Senate eulogy of Massachusetts abolitionist Charles Sumner drew acclaim as an unprecedented plea for justice and amity between the North and South by a native Southerner formerly known as a "firebrand".

The Society believes that the type of behavior exemplified by his struggle for reconciliation between the races and regions of this country in the divisive 1870's is worthy of emulation by his fellow Southerners in the 1970's.