

classified as a noneconomic force, and yet racial feelings may well be influenced unconsciously or even consciously by considerations of economic self-interest. But the slavery question has traditionally been discussed in this manner and, in a rough way, so long as it does not create misunderstanding, this may even be useful. At any rate, Evans has followed the tradition, and I must answer him in his own terminology. I would say, then, that economic forces in the ante-bellum South clearly tended toward voluntary emancipation. That for the time being this did not become manifest in a number of manumissions large relative to the slave population must be explained in terms of countervailing social and political forces. Among these, one thinks in the first place of the feeling that the Negro race was inferior, which caused the whites to contemplate with concern the prospect of a sizeable population of free Negroes. As a result, manifold social and legal obstacles to manumission existed. All this was greatly reinforced by the reaction in the South against northern abolitionism. Precisely how these factors interfered with the law of manumission should be spelled out further, but time is lacking.¹¹ However, I wish to submit that in the long run the prospects may be dim for an institution that has to be maintained against the self-interest of the parties immediately concerned (*in casu* masters and slaves). We must remember that in the ante-bellum South there was hardly a long run, the abolition of the external slave trade being less than fifty years old when the Civil War started. Rome, too, enacted laws against manumission and knew social prejudice against freed slaves; and there, also, it took considerably more than fifty years for slavery to wither away after the large-scale influx of slaves had ceased.

¹¹ I have attempted this elsewhere. See John E. Moes, "The Economics of Slavery in the Ante Bellum South. Another Comment," *Journal of Political Economy*, LXVIII (April, 1960) 183-87.