

## The Three Great Alabama Icons

### Drive-By Truckers

I grew up in North Alabama, back in the 1970's,  
When dinosaurs still roamed the earth Speaking  
Of course of the Three Great Alabama Icons  
George Wallace, Bear Bryant and Ronnie Van Zant  
Now Ronnie Van Zant wasn't from Alabama, he was  
From Florida He was a huge Neil Young fan  
But in the tradition of Merle Haggard writin'  
Okie from Muskogee to tell his dad's point of  
View about the hippies 'n Vietnam, Ronnie felt  
That the other side of the story should be told.  
And Neil Young always claimed that Sweet Home  
Alabama was one of his favorite songs. And legend  
Has it that he was an honorary pall bearer at  
Ronnie's funeral such is the Duality of the  
Southern Thing And Bear Bryant wore a cool  
Lookin' red checkered hat and won football  
Games and there's few things more loved in  
Alabama than football and the men who know how to  
Win at it So when the Bear would come to town,  
There'd be a parade. And me, I was one a' them  
Pussy boys cause I hated football, so I got a  
Guitar but a guitar was a poor substitute for a  
Football with the girls in my high school So my  
Band hit the road and we didn't play no  
Skynyrd either I came of age rebellin'  
Against the music in my high school parkin'  
Lot It wasn't till years later after  
Leavin' the South for a while that I came to  
Appreciate and understand the whole Skynyrd thing  
And its misunderstood glory I left the South  
And learned how different people's perceptions  
Of the Southern Thing was from what I'd seen in  
My life Which leads us to George Wallace Now  
Wallace was for all practical purposes the  
Governor of Alabama from 1962 until 1986 Once,  
When a law prevented him from succeeding himself  
He ran his wife Lerline in his place and she won  
By a landslide He's most famous as the  
Belligerent racist voice of the segregationist  
[ Find more Lyrics on <http://mp3lyrics.org/NET> ]  
South Standing in the doorways of schools and  
Waging a political war against a Federal  
Government that he decried as hypocritical And  
Wallace had started out as a lawyer and a judge  
With a very progressive and humanitarian track  
Record for a man of his time. But he lost his  
First bid for governor in 1958 by hedging on the  
Race issue, against a man who spoke out against  
Integration Wallace ran again in '62 as a  
Staunch segregationist and won big, and for the  
Next decade spoke out loudly He accused Kennedy  
And King of being communists. He was constantly on  
National news, representing the "good" people  
Of Alabama And you know race was only an issue  
On TV in the house that I grew up in Wallace  
Was viewed as a man from another time and place  
And when I first ventured out of the South, I was

Shocked at how strongly Wallace was associated  
With Alabama and its people Ya know racism is a  
Worldwide problem and it's been since the  
Beginning of recorded history and it ain't  
Just white and black But thanks to George  
Wallace, it's always a little more convenient to  
Play it with a Southern accent. And bands like  
Lynyrd Skynyrd attempted to show another side of  
The South One that certainly exists, but few  
Saw beyond the rebel flag And this applies not  
Only to their critics and detractors, but also  
From their fans and followers. So for a while,  
When Neil Young would come to town, he'd get  
Death-threats down in Alabama Ironically, in  
1971, after a particularly racially charged  
Campaign, Wallace began backpedaling, and he  
Opened up Alabama politics to minorities at a rate  
Faster than most Northern states or the Federal  
Government. And Wallace spent the rest of his life  
Trying to explain away his racist past, and in  
1982 won his last term in office with over 90% of  
The black vote Such is the Duality of the  
Southern Thing And George Wallace died back in  
'98 and he's in Hell now, not because he's a  
Racist His track record as a judge and his  
Late-life quest for redemption make a good  
Argument for his being, at worst, no worse than  
Most white men of his generation, North or  
South But because of his blind ambition and his  
Hunger for votes, he turned a blind eye to the  
Suffering of Black America. And he became a pawn  
In the fight against the Civil Rights cause  
Fortunately for him, the Devil is also a  
Southerner