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April 24, 1863

Dear President Lincoln:

The Civil War between the rebelling southern states and the northern states has been dragging on for over two years. In those two years which seem like an eternity, this civil war has caused millions of casualties. Brothers are killing brothers, and the new telegraphs and cameras are bringing such gruesome war news into many American's homes. What could possibly be worth fighting battles that cost thousands of men their lives in a few minutes? At first you stoutly upheld that the objective of the war was to "preserve, protect, and defend" the union and put down the insurgent states. I thank you greatly for making the abolition of slavery in the rebelling states an extension of the purpose of the war. As an abolitionist, I see the great evils in subjugating black men to the whims of white men. However, I am concerned because the abolition of slavery on paper does not necessarily mean the abolition of slavery in practice. I am beginning to see the real justifications for your Emancipation Proclamation.

As Chief Executive of the United States your duty is to enforce the Constitution. The Constitution itself begins with "We the people" which is ideologically opposed to the Confederate States Constitution which begins "We the states". The essence of the social contract between the people and the government has been violated in this war. In your first message to Congress on July 4, 1861, you questioned the ideals of the powers of a democratic republic and the rights of the people. Your primary purpose is always the preservation of the union.

In 1862, I could not agree with your refutation of General David Hunter's localized emancipation proclamations in the areas in which he fought (South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia). General Hunter openly stated that martial law which you, as Commander-in-Chief, instituted in the South cannot co-exist with slavery. The slaves could be an invaluable military asset to the Union generals fighting in the South. However, you are too worried about keeping the bordering states of Missouri, Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky aligned with the Union. You were scared to break your Republican promise of leaving slavery in the south undisturbed. When the cautious border state representatives questioned General Hunter's actions, he responded very sarcastically that no "Fugitive slaves" were used in his troops rather that the ex-slaves were looking for their

"Fugitive masters". Hunter did not see the color a man's skin as important as the practical reasons for using such fierce fighters in the war effort. After all, the slaves would be killed if they were caught. The massacre of 300 slaves at Fort Pillow will spark the desire for slaves to fight. At present, I see your feelings on the fighting of ex-slaves in the union army are changing to more positive. To the slaves, this is a war for their freedom which they should be allowed to fight. *Did not expect reference*

Your address to a panel of free Negroes on August 14, 1862, demonstrates your resolute dedication to the practical unification of the union. You hate slavery, but like most Americans you think there is no reconcilable grounds between blacks and whites. You spoke of the "evil affects" of the black race on the white race and seems to blame the blacks for this civil war. Segregation and race superiority are morally wrong because our white ancestors brought the black people to this continent and treated them like animals. Even after Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, questioned your statements, you upheld what you said as fact. You refused to make a moral stand at this point in the war because you do not want to give the slaves false hope. Your pragmatic views support separation instead of emancipation. Accordingly, you thought slavery was irrelevant to your main objective of saving the union. *OK*

Your feelings toward emancipation for the sake of the Union evolved by the time you made you reply to the Emancipation Memorial on September 13, 1862. You recognized the futility of a declaration of emancipation in accomplishing its written purpose. At the same time, you saw "that emancipation would help us in Europe" because no European nation would support the south if slavery was abolished. You also recognized your power as Commander-in-Chief to do anything to subdue the enemy and bring the war to a close even free the slaves. Your disgust with the rebelling states and the war was evident in your indifference to the potential affect of the angry freed slaves on their masters. You seem to be considering emancipation of the slaves more now than ever as a war objective. However, all this time you will not vindicate the abolition of slavery because slavery is wrong. You focus on the political motives and your own personal feelings. *Did*

The idea of gradual emancipation with pecuniary compensation to the participating states was extended in your preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of September 22, 1862. You decided to free the slaves in the rebelling slave states with no monetary compensation. In addition, you would free the slaves in the Union states with compensation which would reward the border states for remaining loyal to the Union. In your message to Congress on December 1, 1862, you tried to gain support for emancipation by saying that emancipation cannot fail in preserving the union. You tried to foster support for emancipation and demonstrated your concern for public opinion

when you said, "The world will not forget that we say this". Although your Emancipation would be made as an executive order, you obviously support a future law that would abolish slavery. Your Emancipation Proclamation itself which took affect on January 1, 1863, was an expedient for the end of the war. You corroborated your intention of the proclamation as a "military measure" for the end of the war in your letter to Salmon Chase, Chief Justice in January 1863. The proclamation was the same as the preliminary except that it guaranteed gradual emancipation with compensation when the war was over. I agree with this gradual measure because it would be cruel and ineffective to suppress the southern way of life <sup>in my own state of Md.</sup> with sudden emancipation.

Your decision to emancipate the slaves in the seceding south plagued your life for eighteen months, and I must commend you on making such a politically advantageous and morally uplifting resolution. You had to be concerned with European support for the South and your previous policy of leaving slavery unmolested in the south. You wisely extended the object of the war from the completely practical preservation of the union to the moral and practical freedom of the slaves. You achieved your goal to prevent European support of the South as seen in your letter to the English workingmen in Manchester who were suffering because of the absence of cotton trade with the South. You thanked them for their effort in the universal "triumph of justice, humanity and freedom". Although you could not legally free the slaves in the slave states of the Union without an amendment to the Constitution you wisely advised us border states to emancipate gradually. I am disturbed that slavery still exists here and will not be abolished until the Constitution is amended, but I am relieved that the Emancipation Proclamation will include the freeing of slaves in the objectives of this war. The proclamation will bring this war to a faster close. Most importantly, the morality or mankind as embodied in such a cruel institution of slavery gives this war a true objective.

Sincerely,

*John Miller*

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*all dec. very well integrated!*

*a pleasure to read.*

*Superior use  
of dec. and  
outside sources -  
excellent explanation  
(a bit long)*