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Re: Notes w/ Lincon/EP

IV. Toward the Emancipation Proclamation

A. Lincoln Views the Crisis

Backgrounder: By 1862 there was pressure to change the war from a limited police action into a war of liberation--to end slavery.

Point I was trying to make was that much of this pressure came from ordinary people who trying to influence this crucial decision. Spoke of the "contrabands"(slaves in the field); the man in the Union ranks who were fighting in the South; and some sympathetic/opportunistic Union officers in the field who were freeing slaves and using them in the Union war effort. (And as Oates points out from abolitionists and northern black leaders like Frederick Douglass).

Lincoln was not unconscious about these pressures. But the ultimate decision had to be his as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Northern armies.

Some things that Lincoln alone had to be concerned about on this issue of war aims:

Lincoln was elected in 1860 as a minority president and still was responsible for keeping a demographically divided North--a diverse economy: industry and agriculture; city and farm--on the ultimate purpose of Lincoln's national strategy and political goals.

He also had to keep a bipartisan coalition together long enough to defeat the Confederacy. A coalition of antislavery Republicans and opposition Democrats who were indifferent to the immorality of slavery. And many Northern Republicans who were only antislavery in terms of keeping this institution out of the western territories. They would both cooperate in a war to end secession but would they support a war to end slavery?

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Lincoln had to think about what a transformation of the war aims would mean for the morale of the Union Army. Would most of the men in the ranks and the officer corps support a war of liberation? (He had to worry about Northern racism). He was asking a great deal of these young men. Sending them into a "foreign" land to fight and die. It was essential that they be certain about what the Union war aims were and supported these aims.

All of Lincoln's skills as a Great Communicator would be called upon to keep the Union war effort fixed on a national strategy that commanded a national consensus. If he was going to expand those war aims and turn the war into something additional to preserving the Union he would have to be sensitive about timing of any announcement.

Above all, a thing that weighed most heavily with Lincoln, were the Border States. Lincoln was alleged to have claimed that he would like God on his side but he certainly could not manage without Kentucky. Importance of the border states.

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1. Lincoln as "hegehog". Comes from British philosopher Isaiah Berlin who wrote an essay on Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. Essay was entitled "Hedgehog and the Fox."

In Berlin's little essay the hedgehog is a leader or thinker who relateds everything to a single, central vision. . . a single universal organizing principle. The Fox, on the other hand, is superficially brilliant, knows a little about a great many things, and pursues many ends, often simultaneously, but these are often unrelated and even contradictory.

Lincoln fits the hedgehog similie or metaphor. Lincoln's intellect, we are told, was not flashy nor even brilliant, but exhaustive. He examined every fiber of an argument. . .

Lincoln's central vision was the preservation of the US and its constitutional government, which he was convinced would be destroyed if the CSA established their independence. His was a profound nationalism rooted in the Declaration of Independence and the ideals of liberty and equal opportunity that the Declaration implanted as a revolutionary new idea at the beginning of our nation. For Lincoln, the hedgehog, this fiery trial was engaged in was nothing less than the testing of popular government was still an experiment. But if the Confederacy succeeded it would destroy this experiment and seal the doom of of what Lincoln characterized as the "last best hope for maintaining in thwe world a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

It was as simple and as complex as that. To Lincoln's great credit he was able to focus national attention on this article of faith.

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Re: Notes/Outline w/ Lincoln and EP/War Leader

V. War Becomes Revolution

A. The Sable Arm--see notes

B. Kincoln Finds His Generals

Lincoln as war leader was able to recognize that the war aim had to change. Denotes his adaptability under trying times. By 1862 he realized that the North's limited war was not going to restore the Union. He shifted then to an unlimited war, a new war whose strategy was to prosecute a violent, remorseless and revolutionary war. He was ready to wage a total war against the South. To destroy her armies, lay waste to her land, and systematically overturn her political and social system.

This kind of war would start once Lincoln found his generals. In Grant and Sherman he found the military tools who would change the Southern mind by shedding more blood, destroying more property, and inflict more suffering than the South's illusions of independence could withstand.

Once this new war was launched Lincoln never flinched. He remained loyal to Sherman and Grant because they were the kind of men who would persevere in this bloodletting; this war of attrition.

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Too many men had "Seen the Elephant" or "The Monkey Show." War was large scale murder pure and simple.

Unless the Union war aim had changed this problem in the North would have gotten more central. Speaking of a great moral problem that would or could have nullified the advantage of the North had in manpower (4: to one advantage)

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III Toward the Emancipation Proclamation

A. Lincoln Views the Problem

1. See notes for H. 225