

History 225

Re: Outline with Lincoln and Black Freedom

III. Wartime Reconstruction/Lincoln's Ten Per Cent Plan

IV. Lincoln and Black Freedom

- A. Controversy/ Summary of Lincoln's wartime record
  - B. Wartime North/ white-supremacy reigns
  - C. Louisiana Experiment: A test Case?
  - D. The "Humbug" of Butler and Colonization
- 

The Rise and Fall of the CSA

I. Failure of the Confederate leadership

- A. Congress and Cabinet (see McPherson, pp. 360-367)

II. The "Quiet Rebellion" of the Plain Folks of the South

Failure of Richmond to respond to the war-related needs of the plain people. This "quiet rebellion" stemmed from a sense of exploitation and injustice from those upper class rulers of the Confederacy. it produced a sense of class bitterness and tension.

[Note: Keep in mind Gallagher's essay in which the thrust is that to understand the collapse of the CSA and the decline of Southern will to fight you have to look at the news from the front.

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Re: Notes w/ Lincoln and Black Freedom

The Controversy Over Lincoln and Black Freedom:

The argument that Lincoln was not a reluctant Emancipator seems established by the evidence. This is not to say that Lincoln did it all alone. We have already looked at the pressures or forces that complemented his "transforming" leadership role in changing the Northern war aims from Union to Liberty. He was not pushed into abolitionism by military and political pressures, he seized the opportunity to end slavery that the war opened to him.

There is, however, less evidence of Lincoln as a friend of black rights. I mean as far as the extent of his commitment to equal rights for the former bondsman--civil liberties, civil rights, and the right to vote. -

*Full rights of Citizenship*

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A short note on the historiography of this question. (State my own position).

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Presidential Reconstruction (10% Plan)  
III. ~~The Louisiana Experiment:~~

Presidential reconstruction begins while the war is still at full tilt when Lincoln issued his Reconstruction Proclamation in December 1863.

Look at the provisions of Lincoln's plan--best remembered as his 10% plan. Ask the question was Lincoln going to be tender hearted and forgiving with the South. (The myth of the Lincoln with "charity to all and malice toward none.") Or was he going to be a pretty tough reconstructionist?

Class: Provisions of his Ten Percent Plan.

1. Restoration of the former seceded state if at least 10% of the population(white)that voted in the last election before the war (1860) would take an oath of loyalty to the Union. Those then newly enfranchised could vote in a new state government under the condition that they renounce slavery.

2. Those former Confederates who were denied the oath: all those who held CSA diplomatic and civilian posts, all who served as rebel officers above the rank of colonel in the army or lieutenant in the navy, and all those who resigned their commissions in the US armed forces and joined the Confederacy or left Congress or judicial posts to join the rebellion, and all who had treated Union soldiers as other than POWS.

All of the rest of the male population upon taking an oath of loyalty to the Union would be political "reincarnated," that is, given the right to vote in a new state government.

Keys to Lincoln's 10% plan:

1. To outlaw and isolate the old ruling class in Dixie. He was determined that the old slave regime would not return to power.

*Severage - no change in rights or status of white property owners in the South  
with respect to the former Confederate*

2. Lincoln was looking to attract to his reconstructed state govts. those southerners who were Union loyalists. Moreover, to make sure that this minority would not be overwhelmed by the die-hard, rebellious elements who actively supported the "Rebellion" would not overrun the minority, Lincoln would protect them with the Union army.

*Future of Republican Party - A nucleus for a Union Party in the South*

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3. That the Ten Percent Plan was really a wartime measure. It was not necessarily a policy set in stone. That Lincoln's approach to reconstruction would probably change as the circumstances changed. (That is vintage Lincoln--opportunism, flexibility, and a refusal to be doctrinaire and paint himself in a corner).

Note: Lincoln's attitude toward the former Confederate war leaders was not one of vindictiveness--no postwar show trials, executions, and public displays of humiliation. If he had his way, Jeff Davis and the other members of the Confederate hierarchy would simply be allowed to leave the country. He'd shoo them away like a flock of errant chickens.  
...

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Re: Notes on Lincoln & Black Freedom

What about the man behind the myth. Dealing w/ Lincoln we are dealing with one of our greatest legends.

Legend of the great Emancipator

Legend of the Saviour of the Union

Christlike in his character and in his ultimate fate.

*merit*

Lincoln as Representative American. The injunction to Get Right With Lincoln is no joke.

Question posed about Lincoln's racial views: The answer as far as the national self-esteem and psyche is very important.

Was Lincoln a racist? Or at least a crypto-racist who never really advanced beyond the general white supremacist assumptions of his own times?

*A Reluctant Emancipator*

Was he a man who changed his racial assumptions over time but never gave up his belief that blacks should be free but could never hope to enjoy the full rights of citizenship?

Or can we see--perhaps only dimly--in his Reconstruction policies that Lincoln was a friend of black freedom and was dedicated to push that freedom as far along as was maximally possible?

Some historians and commentators on this question get a good deal of mileage out of Lincoln's public statements about the races during his quest for public office in the 1850s. Especially by quoting from his speeches during the Lincoln/Douglas debates in 1858 when Lincoln was establishing himself as a presidential contender in his nationally-covered debates with Senator Douglas.

During these debates Lincoln did endorse then existing system of white supremacy, except for slavery (A Vast Moral Sin). He defended white supremacy on the grounds of expediency, and not principle, and on the grounds of incompatibility rather than inherent inequality of the white and black races.

Assuming that in the context of America in the 1860s that one race had to be on top, Lincoln admitted preferring that the superior position be assigned to the white race.

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Note: Read Frederickson article you will see how a historian uses these public statements to contend that Lincoln was not very advanced on racial question.

Of course, using the Lincoln/Douglas debates one has to recognize that Lincoln was gunning for public office in Illinois. Had he taken a more enlightened view on race we would not be wrestling with this question. There would have been no historic Lincoln. Racial conservatives and anti-black voters would have crushed him in his bid for office.

Another issue that reflects on Lincoln and his racial attitudes is the question of black colonization. Lincoln's apparent intense interest in repatriation of blacks back to Africa (Clay and the American Colonization Movement) or out of the United States. He recommended this in his first two annual messages to Congress; urged it on black leaders in Washington; and endorsed the idea in his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in 1862.

We know he demonstrated some apparent zeal about colonization with the Haitian and Panama projects.

What strikes us here is the petty scale of these projects. They could only accommodate several thousands blacks at best. Why this zeal for colonization?

It must be recognized that Lincoln's public enthusiasm for colonization took place in the last six months of 1862. After this his interest flagged. And after he unleashed the thunderbolt of the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 he never again spoke of colonization again. (Mention the Neely article) See Adendum.

I think the important consideration is the chronology in question. Why the last six months of 1862? Why did Lincoln drag the colonization question into the public domain especially during this time? A time we know that he was personally struggling with the pros and cons of expanding the Northern war aim from union to Union and Liberty. I think it can be argued that Lincoln may have been playing up the colonization alternative as a political ploy to quiet anticipated white fears and reactions to the abolishment of slavery.

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Summary: Lincoln's record as a friend of freedom, beyond abolition. needs no myth or exaggeration.

He let war come rather than retreat from the containment of slavery position he stood by in 1860. Within a year after the war started he determined that slavery should die. Nine months later he proclaimed the emancipation proclamation without knowing for certain whether this action would further or destroy the Northern war aim of restoring the Union. By mid-1863 he was willing to deny readmission to southern states unwilling to abolish slavery. Refusing to let freedom rest solely upon the uncertain authority of presidential proclamation and congressional legislation, or upon the fragile grounds of state action, Lincoln succeeded in obtaining the passage of the 13th Amendment. Finally, he did not pull back from pushing for the vote for blacks.

[Source: L. Cox, Lincoln & Black Freedom]

By the war's end Lincoln seemed on the verge of a new phase of reconstruction, a tougher phase that would call for some form of black suffrage, more stringent voting qualifications for ex-Confederates, and possibly an army of occupation for the postwar South. . . .

[source: Oates, Man behind the Myths]

1861-1863  
Abolished the  
Tongue Down  
in the  
South  
Case

Re: Notes w/ Lincoln & black Freedom

### III. Louisiana Experiment:

It was Louisiana that provided Lincoln relative freedom to install his Ten Percent Plan. . . .and to push for more than emancipation.

Lincoln did manage to get at least 10% to take the oath of loyalty among Louisianians. A government was established in early 1864. The new Governor was a moderate named Michael Hahn. Nine days after Hahn was inaugurated, Lincoln wrote him a letter containing the "suggestion" that the upcoming La. constitutional convention admit some blacks to the franchise--he noted "the very intelligent" and "those who have fought gallantly in our ranks."

This was typical of Lincoln. The "suggestion" was really a directive. In light of the fact that General Banks and the Union army was the decisive force in Louisiana. The war was still on and the Hahn government really could not pretend to be the government based on the majority will of the people of Louisiana. It was a civilian government but it was, de facto, being held up by Union bayonets. Under the circumstances Lincoln's "suggestion" was readily read by Hahn and Banks as a Presidential directive.

Some points to be made:

*Lincoln's directive is early 1864*

Typcially Lincoln, to try and get the former Confederate state and now the free state of Louisiana not only to abolish slavery but to initiate --even on a select basis--the idea of black suffrage. This is the same kind of approach Lincoln took earlier before he launched the Thunderbolt of the Emancipation Proclamation from the executive office when he tried to cajole some of the border states to begin w/ a compensated emancipation program . . .

The reason, of course, was because of the explosive nature of the issue of black enfranchisement.

Class: Material on this in McPherson's OBF. What was the general reception in the North at this time about extending the vote to free blacks????

Addendum: use OBF - Foner's Reconstruction



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When LA. drafted her constitution there were no provisions for black suffrage. But Lincoln's behind-the-scenes pressure or "suggestion" was used by Governor Hahn to prevent the majority attitude among delegates from placing in the state constitution from forbidding the extension of the vote to blacks at all or for all times. In place of that kind of language, there was a provision in the constitution allowing black suffrage on the basis of military service, taxation, or intellectual fitness by a simple act of the Louisiana legislature.

The La. constitution contained provisions for all children without regard to race (public education), and the enrollment of all men, regardless of color, in the state militia.

Lincoln did not get all he asked; but he got a good deal, and he accepted this for the time being. He did not threaten to block any recognition of the new state constitution by having Congress refuse to seat the state's elected delegates to the US Congress.

Lincoln wanted Louisiana admitted as a free state as soon as possible. He was anxious that Louisiana be admitted to the Union before the 1864 presidential election. Lincoln wanted the state in the Union with its moderate leadership so that it could support the Thirteenth Amendment when it came before the Congress.

Summary: Lincoln would not force suffrage on La. not in an election year knowing what a combustible political issue it was North and South. He did manage to get a compromise with the legislature having the power to enfranchise blacks in the future. Note, too, that Lincoln based his "suggestion" of black vote on the war record--blacks who saw service for the Union. That could be read to imply "universal suffrage" in the sense that many blacks in union Blue were not literate; they were not from the intellectual elite class.

Lincoln may not have been too far off when he noted that the La. free state constitution was more progressive racially than the state constitution of Illinois, Lincoln's home state.

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most  
at, near  
of + Missouri  
boss - Canceled  
- have them  
or of the  
inferiority

Lincoln & Louisiana Conf. Was a foundation to build on for the future - both races.

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Addendum to page 4 P. 7

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Addendum on suffrage issue in 1864/5

Examples from assigned pages in Text:

1) Thirteen Amendment was defeated in the House in June 1864

Understand that this was  
a White Supremacist era. i  
Within a vast number of Northern  
Whites were opposed to black  
suffrage.

2) Voting in Maryland and Missouri to abolish slavery by constitutional amendment in their state constitutions. Slavery was only abolished by the overwhelming votes from Union soldiers.

These are examples of attitudes about ending slavery. And not about equal rights or the extension of the vote.

In 1862 in Illinois approved constitutional provisions against black migration into the state and against any black from holding office or voting.

Before the war only four<sup>5</sup> states. All in New England, provided equal suffrage. No other states extended this right to blacks during the war. In the fall of 1865 Republican attempts to introduce the franchise to blacks in Connecticut, Wisconsin, and Minnesota failed in referendum voting. (See Foner, Reconstruction, Chpt. 2)

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Addendum/ Notes on Ben Butler's Reported Conversation w/ Lincoln

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Ben Butler in his Autobiography printed in 1892 remarks on a conversation he allegedly had with Lincoln in February 1865.

According to Butler's account, the Union general was called to the White house for a conference about the last stages of the war.

Butler reports Lincoln as saying that he "could hardly believe that the North and South could live peacefully together unless we can get rid of the negroes."

So we have a troubled Lincoln who has still as late as 1865 holding onto the idea of colonization because he believes that only colonization as the only real alternative to perpetual racial conflict.

Recommend the M. Neely article. (Civil War History Vol. 25-  
(March 1979)

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We have to remember that first off, in emancipating the slaves Lincoln also was emancipating himself. He was finally able to lash out as Chief Executive against an institution that he always regarded as an immoral evil.

Furthermore, he recognized clearly that the S able Arm played a critical role in ending the war. Without the 190,000 black men in arms (and the great majority were not free blacks from the North but former slaves) it was doubtful that the Union could have won the war (See Glathaar essay).

If any one was to be colonized it was the leaders of the CSA. He hoped that they would be frightened enough, he told his Cabinet, that they would flee the country.

After he enunciated the Emancipation Proclamation he never spoke publicly about any colonization schemes again. To have done so would have been inconsistent with the Gettysburg Address, which called for a new birth of freedom for whites as well as blacks. (It was in the Gettysburg Address that he spoke eloquently in defense of liberty which his critics said he filed to do when he launched the EP. Would Lincoln, after enlisting 190,000 blacks have thrown them out of the country after the war was over?