

History 225
Re: Notes w/ Union War Aims/Slavery
Source, Paludan

Pressures on Lincoln.

See Congressional action. The First Confiscation Act in August of 1861. Terms: Slaves were freed whose owners were using them to directly support the Rebellion.

See General Butler at Ft. Monroe and the "contraband" issue.

Lincoln and Fremont and Hunter. Lincoln repeals there "emancipation" actions. He is determined to keep control of the issue. It will be resolved by Executive power not unauthorized decisions made by commanders in the field.

Lincoln recognized that the slavery issue was spilling over into Union politics and would have to be dealt with soon. Best example is the case of General Charles Stone. He was the general in command at the battle of Ball's Bluff (1861).

Stone's verbal tussle with Senator Sumner over the issue of fugitive slaves. Sumner was one of the radicals in the Senate and he supported early on the freeing of slaves by Union forces.

Stone was a Democrat in his politics. He opposed turning the war into a social revolution (like McClellan). Stone publicly called Sumner a "coward." Sumner's radical colleagues in the Senate came to Sumner's rescue. The radicals got the ear of Secretary of War Stanton and urged him to discipline Stone. He did. Stone was placed under arrest and served six months in solitary confinement.

The point here is that after Ball's Bluff the Congress pushed its way into the conduct of the war. The Committee on the Conduct of the War. They saw their role to pressure the Union Generals (especially those who were Democrats like Stone and McClellan) to be more aggressive in battle and also in subverting slavery.

In short, early on there were growing divisions between the politicians in the Republican Party and some of the generals about the Union's war aims. The radicals reflected the growing suspicion about Democratic generals and their willingness to prosecute the war against the Confederacy (many of whose leaders were former Democrats).

All part of the hysteria and a kind of "McCarthyism" springing up in the North.