

History 225

Re: Lecture Outline

I. Evolving Union War Aims

A. Initial War Aim

1. Crittenden/Johnson resolution(see
Text)

II. Pressures for Change

A. Slaves as central to process(See I.
Berlin article)

B. Military

C. Congressional

D. Public pressure--H. Greely "Prayer
of 20,000,000/frustration over stalemated war

III. Lincoln and S lavery

A. Lincoln and the Declaration

B. As War Leader

1. Border states

2. Contraband/Fremont/ Butler

IV. Toward the Emancipation Proclamation

A. The EM/ read from text
Distinction between provisional and final product

B. Sable Arm

C. assessment

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Notes w/ Evolving War Aims

II. Pressure for Change:

A. Military: The ultimate realization that a limited war would not save the Union--that the original assumptions were wrong--certainly set in with dramatic force in the last months of 1862. Perhaps First Bull Run caused both sides to reevaluate the idea that this was going to be a short war. But after Shiloh and then the series of Confederate counterpunches in the Shenandoah campaign by Jackson, Lee's victories in the Seven Days Battles, culminating in Second Manassas, had the Union in the East on the ropes. The limited war strategy of conquering Southern territory clearly would not do the job as long as Confederate armies remained intact and strong. *****

As war leader Lincoln recognized the need to redefine or change the Union's national strategy. To move from a limited to a total war--to destroy the enemy's political, economic, and social order which implies unconditional surrender.

There was no question that the Union had the resources to support this new national strategy. The question was whether Lincoln could get political support for the changing war aims and find the generals who could implement this national strategy with the right military strategy to destroy the CSA's armies, resources, and morale.

[Problem of inconsistency in national strategy and military strategy can produce only disaster. We saw this in Korea and Vietnam.]

Lincoln would eventually find the right military leaders in Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan.

***** The issue here was that the campaigns of 1862 proved how difficult it was to destroy Civil War armies. Hence the bloodstalemted war. The question at the time was would the stalemted war favor an ultimate union victory by prolonging the war to the point where the CSA would run out of manpower and resources and will, or would it contribute to a CSA victory by proving to the world(esp. Britain) that the Confederate armies could stay in the field and avoid destruction. Would this ultimately bring about European recognition of the South's Independence?

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Re: Notes w/ Evolving War Aims

Some Notes to use w/ Was Lincoln a Pragmatic War Leader or a Reluctant Emancipator?

1. Lincoln and Congress:

Lincoln cooperated w/ congress on all their measures. He signed the bills abolishing slavery in DC and in the territories and requiring emancipation as a condition for admitting the new state of West Virginia.

Lincoln did write up a veto for the Congress's 1862 Confiscation Act. But he never tried to enact it to "kill" the measure. The reason was he was not satisfied with freeing slaves as "captives of war," this would be too narrow. He wanted to begin the process as a national war emergency measure that fell within the authority of the President of the US. Moreover, the July 17 act came after he made his decision on July 13 to go ahead with the Emancipation Proclamation.

So he was not out of step w/ his congressional party. As we will see Lincoln was first-and-foremost a party man. Unlike his successor.

The other thing to keep in mind was that another president, no less committed to victory and the Union, might not have agreed that the emancipation of slaves was the only alternative to "surrendering the Union." That either we will subdue slavery or it will subdue us, the Lincoln position, very well might not have been the final view of this by another president.

Another president might not have been willing to chance the consequences of raising the Union national strategy or war aim to a higher level. What would its effects be on enlistments, upon the loyalty of the border states, upon the morale of the fighting men North as well as South. Even Lincoln was not sure whether his action would hinder or advance Union fortunes. In choosing to do it he said "I hope for greater gain than loss; but of this, I was not entirely confident."

refer back to language of Lincoln's 1st Inaugural

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Re: Notes w/ Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln may have preferred gradual, compensated emancipation rather than resort to radical military emancipation to begin the process and win legal security and popular support for his actions recognizing what was at stake--the preservation of the Union. While he may have preferred this approach, he did not insist upon it.

By Summer of '62 (July 13th) Lincoln decided upon issuing the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. He holds back until the Union victory at Antietam.

✓ Two points to make about the scope of the Emancipation Proclamation:

(1) Lincoln bases the authority for the EP as an executive war measure. Slaves to be freed were in Confederate-held areas and not behind Union lines after January 1, 1863. Exemptions covered those slaves behind Union lines and especially held in the border States that were loyal to the Union. Lincoln's reasoning was not a concession to slavery but a concern for the legally defensible position of his actions. The EP was a war measure based on his Constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief of the Army against the insurrection taking place in the South. To unleash this thunderbolt against slavery everywhere--without exemptions--could not be made upon this constitutional basis because the slave-holding border states were not at war with the Union. His justification for an unlimited emancipation would have to be made on other grounds than a war measure--morality or expedient politics. As Lincoln said to Chase when faced with Chase's appeal that he resist all exemptions, "Would I not thus give up all footing upon constitution or law?"

In short, he was concerned about future action by a hostile Congress or Courts to overturn the EP.

(2) The preliminary emancipation issued in September was not to go into effect until January 1, 1863. Why the 90 days reprieve? Did he expect or was he trying to lure some Southern states to return to the Union to avoid abolishment or loss of their slave institution?

All we can say here is that in December 1862 in his State of the Union address to Congress he made a plea for a constitutional amendment ending slavery in the United States. So any southern state was put on warning that even if they did return to the Union they would be subjected to continuing pressure to end slavery.

Re: Notes w/ Emancipation Proclamation

Summary: Lincoln announced the EP for a variety of reasons:

(1) To clarify the status of fugitive slaves. Those who had come into the Union ranks. Now they would not be returned to their masters and would, instead, be used in the Union war effort in some capacity.

(2) In freeing the slaves, Lincoln hit the South where she lived. Slaves were the stomach of the Rebellion as Frederick Douglass had been saying since the war began. Slaves made up 40% of the Southern population and they were indispensable assets to the Confederate cause. Now these assets were turned into assets for the Union.

(3) Former slaves and free blacks in the North would be recruited into the Union Army to solve some of the Union's manpower woes. (At least 180,000 to 200,000 blacks would serve in the Union military before the war was over).

Mention that in November 1862 Lincoln's Attorney General Edward Bates ruled that American citizenship was based solely on place of birth and not on race or any other factor. Bates' reading of the constitutional basis of citizenship overturned the Taney decision in the Dred Scott case in 1857.

(3) Lincoln hoped w/ the EP to keep Britain out of the conflict (remark on Graebner's essay). But the EP did throw the moral onus of the war into the Confederacy's court. It masked the South's claim that she was fighting for self-determination, etc. which had appeal in Europe. Now the Union took the high moral ground away from Jeff Davis and left the CSA fighting to defend an institution that was generally held by Europe as an obsolete and inhumane institution. An atavism of the past.

(4) Last, but certainly not least, to end the scourge of slavery in the United States. Lincoln finally had a chance to hit out at slavery. Somethinh he also privately contended was a grievous moral wrong. If slavery was not wrong then nothing was wrong.