

Abraham Lincoln- emancipation proclamation vs. previous quotes assignment

[History](#)



“ I am not nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races. ” How can this 1858 statement of Abraham Lincoln be reconciled with his 1862 Emancipation Proclamation? After reading this quote, how can one think of Abraham Lincoln as the great man he is said to be? It has become very clear that Lincoln was not thinking of blacks as people when he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation. He was thinking of what was right in the eyes of others.

He was under pressure to do what the majority of the country wanted, and to do what seemed right in the eyes of the more developed super powers of the eastern hemisphere, like England. What Lincoln really wanted was what was extrinsically morally right. Not what was necessarily best for the people of his country. So one might ask: “ How could he take a country to war if he wasn’t deeply dedicated to his cause? ” He did not plan to. Things just happened that way.

How is Lincoln, “ Honest Abe,” supposed to look out into the faces of American knowing that slavery is wrong? How is he supposed to ignore the issue with radical abolitionist parties raiding armories like Harpers Ferry, writing newspapers like Garrison’s “ The Liberator,” selling books like Uncle Tom’s Cabin, by Harriet Beecher Stowe? How does he justify the selling of people to English tourists who come to America and leave with horrific memories of the experience? He couldn’t. The pressure was on and he wanted to slowly wean the South away from slavery.

That, Lincoln knew, would not be easy, and lacking the foresight of John Brown who, until his untimely death prophesied that the sins of this country

wouldn't be purged without much bloodshed, didn't think it would mean Civil War. Not even after the South seceded did he think it would be really bad. The boys in blue, Union soldiers, all lined up on a sunny day in July singing patriotic songs of triumph and glee, with their wives and families all sitting on the front lawn of the Mc Lean's and expect to simply slap the Confederates on the wrists and welcome them back into the Union.

At that point the war has not been about freeing slaves. It became a struggle to keep the Union. So the reason Lincoln carried on with the war was not to really free slaves but to keep the South in the Union. It was not until later in the war he drafted the Emancipation Proclamation. This happened after the battle of Antietam and was basically meant to be a slap in the face. The Union feels they are going to win, so the South will have to come back to the Union and not only will they return to the Union but they will do so without their slaves.

It was about conquest, winning, and who was the better man. Lincoln didn't free those slaves for his own good. It was a way of stripping morale away from the South. The war wasn't even won and already Lincoln was telling them what they were going to do. That is a major statement. Not only was that the case but if we examine the Emancipation Proclamation (EP), we will find that in his first draft he didn't free the slaves in the border states. That's because he did not want them to secede. Right? Of course but think about it.

If freeing the slaves were such a dire emergency he would have devised a plan to free all of the slaves and incorporate them into the American society. However, he did not. It only looks good that "Honest Abe" is trying so hard

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to free these people who have been oppressed for over 200 years. Therefore, in the eyes of others he's still a great man. A man who gave up so much to do what was right. A man who was willing to get slaves free at almost any costs. But he's a man who is doing what is best for him.

By freeing Southern slaves maybe they would rise up against their masters and help fight the war. Maybe it would weaken Southern morale and make them want to give in. and by keeping slavery in the Border States, we the Union can have the upper hand in this war. What else could Lincoln have possibly been thinking? Look at the 10% plan he made for post war Reconstruction. What is keeping 10% of rebel slave-hungry votes going to do? Maybe they will vote the way you want them to, if that, but will they behave the way you want them to?

Was the South's word really as good as gold? Would they comply with the nation's standards? Most likely not. Lincoln, in the back of his mind, was well aware of this also. He just wanted to do what seemed right. If someone is abusing a poor, defenseless animal, wouldn't you want to help it. set it free? That is exactly what Lincoln did. He wasn't thinking along the lines of having to sit in the same room with a " Nigger," letting them have the same rights as him. That would be asking too much. He just wanted to be old " Honst Abe. He didn't want to fight a Civil War to be a great guy, but he did it to keep the Union together. He did what he did because he thought it was best. Not because he really cared about the people. If Americans had really cared about the people, would the " peculiar institution" that murders, rapes and splits apart families have ever existed? Probably not. So just what would

possible make us think that Abe Lincoln was so much greater, compassionate and sentimental than his predecessors? Nothing!