

"EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION was a TOOL of WAR, Not an Instrument of Freedom."

The whole notion of "Juneteenth" is – to borrow from Charles Dickens – at best, a specious humbug. To the most simpleton of researchers the Emancipation Proclamation was merely a war measure with absolutely no value to any slave. That is why after issuing the Emancipation, Lincoln pressed the Congress to pass an amendment that truly abolished slavery because he knew the EP document was nothing more than a paper tiger – it had no legal standing.

However, it did cause a lot of civilians deaths as Union officers believed it nullified select articles of the Lieber Codes, which established a code of conduct with which the Union soldiers were *supposed* to operate around civilians.

In Missouri in 1864, a Union Army officer, Col. William Switzler, bought a slave named Dick for \$126. This transaction was not unusual. Union Army officers owned slaves and many were pro-slavery, just as were some of their Confederate counterparts. But this sale took place one year *after* President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation; the document that many people today wrongly think freed the slaves.

Annually, black communities across the country celebrate the fuzzy history of June 19, called Juneteenth. As the story goes, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that slaves were now free. As one source stated, the Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on Texans due to the small number of Union troops to enforce the new Executive order. A more accurate comment would have been that the Emancipation Proclamation had little effect anywhere.

A careful reading of the proclamation shows that emancipation

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applied only to all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.

The proclamation defined areas of the Confederacy under occupation by the Union Army where slaves were not subject to the terms of Lincoln's emancipation.

Despite their acceptance of slavery: Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri did not join the Confederacy. Although divided in their loyalties, a combination of political maneuvering and Union military pressure kept those states from seceding and excluded them from the terms of the proclamation. Washington, D.C., and all Northern states were excluded and, oddly enough, a seceded state, Tennessee. The very legality of the proclamation was in considerable doubt, even by Lincoln himself, since slavery was legal throughout the country.

Believing that Lincoln freed the slaves after his personal racist comments throughout his career shows considerable historical naiveté. This mirrors the thoughts of Lerone Bennett in his book, *Forced Into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream*. Or as Dr. Theman Taylor, black professor of history at the University of Central Arkansas at Conway, wrote: "To credit the 16th president of the United States with being the Great Emancipator is shameless hypocrisy, a pathological exercise in intellectual sissyism."

Lincoln did not favor African-American citizenship in the U.S., advocating, instead, colonization, deportation as a solution to the race problem. In August of 1862, *one month before* he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, he called African-American leaders to the White House to tell them Congress had appropriated money to

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colonize "their kind" outside the country. While Lincoln felt that African-Americans were included in the Declaration of Independence, he denied and did not believe in social and political equality of the races, refusing to support the abolitionist movement.

But let's back up two years when the Southern states began to secede. **Lincoln wanted to keep those states in the Union to collect their excessively high import tariffs for the federal treasury. The Southern states used the issue of slavery as their reason, or excuse, for secession, since that presented more validity to the Washington government than seceding for the real reason of economics.**

Enter the 1861 version of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution which Lincoln favored, written by the Northern Republicans in Congress and explained by an excerpt from the article, *Stopping Time: The Pro-Slavery and Irrevocable Thirteenth Amendment*, by A. Christopher Bryant; Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy, Vol. 26, 2003:

In the post-secession winter of 1861, both Houses of Congress approved a proposed thirteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Three northern States even managed to ratify the proposal before the Civil War intervened. That version of the thirteenth amendment, introduced in the House by Representative Thomas Corwin of Ohio, purported to prohibit any future amendment granting Congress power to interfere with slavery in the States.

With that constitutional concession agreed to by the Northern controlled Congress, making slavery a permanent and untouchable institution in this country, if slavery was *truly* the primary issue, why didn't the Southern government accept this offering instead of

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choosing to dig in and fight for its independence?

And for the first two years of that fighting, the Confederate armies acquitted themselves well enough that President Lincoln was concerned about the future of his career. Union body counts were rising, and his generals were looking inept. Lincoln decided to move politically, not morally, and in mid-1862, he began looking at the proclamation as a tool of war, not as an instrument of freedom.

The British had their particular view of the proclamation: recognizing it clearly as a war measure for suppressing the so-called rebellion. If the Confederate States of America stopped rebelling before January 1, 1863, they could keep their slaves. The proclamation suggested that one could not own another human **unless they were loyal to the United States**. On the other hand, how could the U.S. president free anyone in another nation?

Neither the proclamation nor general order No. 3 delivered by Gen. Gordon Granger on June 19, 1865 technically freed any slaves. On that date, Texas was not even part of the United States, so any orders issued to the state were invalid. Not until the ratification of the present Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution in December 1865 were slaves truly free in the U.S.

Today's blacks need to rethink Lincoln, the Emancipation Proclamation, and Juneteenth when choosing something to celebrate and, again quoting Dr. Taylor, *"be careful that we do not contribute to the continuance of our own ignorance"*.

