

THE INCOMPLETE AMERICAN REVOLUTION Lincoln's Brthday, 1965

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, THERE HAVE BEEN MEN WHO HAVE BELIEVED IN FREEDOM. AT THE HEIGHT OF THE GREAT GREEK EMPIRE IN THE THIRD AND FOURTH CENTURIES BCE, THE GREEKS, WHO FATHERED MODERN PHILOSOPHY, SPOKE OF THE VIRTUES OF FREEDOM, AND TREASURED THE DEBATES IN THE GOVT. AL COUNCILS. IN THE FOURTH CENTURY BCE ALEXANDER THE GREAT INVADED AFRICA AND ASIA AND CONQUERED MOST OF THE THEN-KNOWN WORLD IN THE NAME OF GREEK DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM. THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING WRONG WITH THE GREEK NOTION OF FREEDOM. IT APPLIED ONLY TO THE ARISTOCRACY. GREEK DEMOCRACY, EXALTED AS IT WAS, WAS MADE POSSIBLE ONLY BECAUSE IT WAS ESTABLISHED UPON A BASIS OF SLAVERY. THE GREEK ARISTOCRAT, WHO WAS JEALOUS OF HIS CHANCE TO SPEAK IN THE ASSEMBLY, OBTAINED HIS LEISURE TIME AT THE EXPENSE OF NUMEROUS SLAVES WHO CARED FOR HIS FIELDS AND HIS POSSESSIONS.

~~IT~~ IT REMAINED FOR THE HEBREWS TO OUTLAW SLAVERY FOR ANY AND ALL MEMBERS OF THEIR SOCIETY. ~~THE~~ THE HEBREWS INTRODUCED THE REVOLUTIONARY DOCTRINE THAT ^{all members of the society were aristocrats.} IT WAS ILLEGAL TO ENSLAVE ANY MEMBER OF THE HEBREW SOCIETY. NONETHELESS, THE HEBREWS UNDERSTOOD THAT A HEBREW COULD HAVE NON-HEBREW SLAVES. THE BIBLE DESCRIBES TO US THE TENSION THAT EXISTED IN ^{ISRAEL} THE HEBREW STATE BECAUSE OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHING THAT ALL MEN WERE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, AND THE PRACTICAL ACCEPTANCE OF SLAVERY AS AN INSTITUTION. GRADUALLY, THE RELIGIOUS TEACHING CONQUERED AND THE LAW WAS ESTABLISHED THAT IF ANY STRANGER WILL ACCEPT THE LAWS OF THE NATION AND ABIDE BY THEM, HE, TOO, WILL BECOME A FULL MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY. THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK OF JOB INVEIGHS AGAINST THE ENSLAVING OF ANY HUMAN BEING, AND WE KNOW THAT JEW IN POST-BIBLICAL TIMES WOULD NOT TOLERATE THE ~~INSTITUTION OF~~ ^{enslaving} SLAVERY FOR ANYONE.

~~WE CANNOT ASSUME THAT EVEN THE HEBREWS WERE SUCCESSFUL~~

WE IN AMERICA, LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE LAND OF THE FREE, YET THIS IS FAR FROM THE TRUTH. EARLY AMERICA WAS SETTLED ^{in part} BY INDENTURE SLAVES, THAT IS ^{by} PEOPLE WHO WERE WORKING OFF A PERIOD OF INVOLUNTARY SLAVERY, USUALLY FOR SEVEN YEARS. THESE INDENTURE SLAVES WERE WHITE PEOPLE FROM THE DEBTOR PRISONS OF EUROPE. AS ~~THE~~ FARMING IN AMERICA ~~WAS~~ GREW INTO A LARGE SCALE INDUSTRY, THE IMPORTATION OF BLACK SLAVES FROM AFRICA BECAME A SINGULARLY PROPULAR ~~INDUSTRY~~ BUSINESS. EVEN THOMAS JEFFERSON, PERHAPS THE GREATEST MIND AMERICA HAS EVER PRODUCED, HAD SLAVES WORKING ON HIS FARMS, ^{and} ~~even~~ THOUGH MR. JEFFERSON LOOKED TO THE DAY WHEN THESE SLAVES WOULD BE FREED, ^{and indeed freed many of his slaves.}

THE SLAVERY PROBLEM SEEMED TO BE SO ^{overwhelming} UNCONQUERABLE THAT PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN SUGGESTED TO A GROUP OF NEGRO LEADERS THAT PERHAPS THEY SHOULD CONSIDER LEAVING AMERICA AND RETURNING TO AFRICA WHERE THEY MIGHT ESTABLISH A FREE COUNTRY.

Ended
~~1858~~

THE POINT OF WHAT WE ARE SAYING IS THIS- THE SEARCH FOR HUMAN FREEDOM IS NEVER ~~OUT OF OVER~~. THE BATTLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR BELOVED COUNTRY HAS BEEN LONG AND HARD, AND THAT BATTLE IS FAR FROM OVER.

TODAY MARKS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTHDAY OF ABRHAM LINCOLN, ONE OF A HANDFUL OF TRULY GREAT AMERICAN PRESIDENTS. IT IS FITTING THAT WE REVIEW SOME ASPECTS OF THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN WHICH HE WAS ENGAGED.

ON THE NIGHT OF JUNE 16, 1858, WHEN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN ILLINOIS CLEARLY STATED THAT LINCOLN AND NOT STEPHEN DOUGLAS WAS ~~ITS~~ CHOICE FOR SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS, LINCOLN MADE ONE OF HIS GREAT SPEECHES. YOU WILL RECALL THAT THE ANTI*SLAVERY FORCES AT FIRST DID NOT ASK THE SOUTH TO END SLAVERY THERE. ~~THE~~ THE ANTI-SLAVERY FORCES WERE WILLING TO ~~ENDURE~~ ^{Tolerate} SLAVERY IN THE SOUTH SO LONG AS ALL NEW TERRITORIES TO BE ADMITTED TO THE UNION WERE ADMITTED ONLY AS FREE STATES. GRADUALLY, IT BECAME CLEAR TO THOSE INTERESTED IN FREEDOM THAT THE SOUTH WAS NOT WILLING TO MAKE THIS COMPROMISE, ~~AND THE ISSUE BECAME ABSOLUTE, EITHER SLAVERY IN ALL STATES, OR FREEDOM IN ALL STATES.~~ HEAR NOW, THESE WORDS FROM THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE FROM ILLINOIS FOR THE SENATE SEAT IN 1858.

leader
their

Spoken in Springfield, Ill., 1858
Senator
Spoken in June 16, 1858

" UNDER THE OPERATION OF THAT POLICY (THE COMPROMISE), THE AGITATION HAS NOT ONLY NOT CEASED, BUT HAS CONSTANTLY AUGMENTED. IN MY OPINION, IT WILL NOT CEASE UNTIL A CRISIS HAS BEEN REACHED AND PASSED. " A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND". I BELIEVE THIS GOVERNMENT CANNOT ENDURE PERMANENTLY HALF SLAVE AND HALF FREE. I DO NOT EXPECT THE UNION TO BE DISSOLVED. I DO NOT EXPECT THE HOUSE TO FALL- BUT I DO EXPECT THAT IT WILL CEASE TO BE DIVIDED. IT WILL BECOME ALL ONE THING, OR ALL THE OTHER. EITHER THE OPPONENTS OF SLAVERY WILL ARREST THE FURTHER SPREAD OF IT, AND PLACE IT WHERE THE PUBLIC MIND SHALL REST IN THE BELIEF THAT IT IS IN THE COURSE OF ULTIMATE EXTINCTION: OR ITS ADVOCATES WILL PUSH IT FORWARD TILL IT SHALL BECOME ALIKE LAWFUL IN ALL THE STATES, OLD AS WELL AS NEW, NORTH AS WELL AS SOUTH".

LINCOLN WAS PROPHETIC IN THIS ADDRESS. IT WAS NOT MANY YEARS BEFORE OUR COUNTRY WAS ENGAGED IN A VICIOUS AND BLOODY WAR. NOT MANY NATIONS HAVE EXPERIENCED SUCH A SAVAGE CIVIL WAR AND SURVIVED.

THOSE SAME SOUTHERNERS WHO WOULD HAVE FOUGHT COURAGEOUSLY TO DEFEND THE FREEDOM OF THE WHITE MAN, COMMITTED THEMSELVES ZEALOUSLY TO A WAR TO DEFEND THE FREEDOM OF THE WHITE MAN TO ENSLAVE THE BLACK MAN. IN HIS SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED WHILE THE NATION WAS STILL AT WAR, LINCOLN SAID, " ~~HOPEFULLY~~ ^{earnestly} DO WE HOPE- ~~SPEEDILY~~ ^{periphrasy} DO WE PRAY THAT THE SOURCE OF WAR MAY PASS AWAY . YET, IF GOD WILLS THAT IT CONTINUE UNTIL ALL THE WEALTH PILED UP BY THE BONDSMAN'S 250 YEARS OF UNREQUITED TOIL SHALL BE SUNK, AND UNTIL EVERY DROP OF BLOOD DRAWN WITH THE LASH SHALL BE PAID BY ANOTHER DRAWN WITH THE SWORD, AS WAS SAID 3000 YEARS AGO, SO STILL MUST IT BE SAID, " THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS ALTOGETHER".

Then Lincoln continued,

" WITH MALICE TOWARDS NONE: WITH CHARITY FOR ALL: WITH FIRMNESS IN THE RIGHT, AS GOD GIVES US TO SEE THE RIGHT, LET US STRIVE ON TO FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN: TO BIND UP THE NATION'S WOUNDS: TO CARE FOR HIM WHO SHALL HAVE BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOWN, AND HIS ORPHAN- TO DO ALL WHICH MAY ACHIEVE

A JUST AND LASTING PEACE AMONG OURSELVES, AND WITH ALL NATIONS".

AND SO THE COSTLY WAR ^{ragged} WAGED ON. ~~NOT UNTIL THE LAST YEAR DID IT SEEM CLEAR THAT THE NORTH WOULD WIN, AND FINALLY GENERAL LEE SURRENDERED AT APPOMATOX.~~

IN NOVEMBER OF 1963, WHILE THE WAR ^{was} STILL WAGED, ^{forcibly} IN ~~ALL ITS FURY~~, LINCOLN DELIVERED HIS NOW FAMOUS GETTYSBURG ADDRESS. THE BRIEF ADDRESS OF 267 WORDS WAS DELIVERED AT THE DEDICATION OF THE CEMETERY ON THE SCENE OF THE BATTLEFIELD. EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD LEARN THESE WORDS BY HEART,

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" A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM " - WE CAN SAY THAT THE CIVIL WAR DID GIVE THE UNITED STATES A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM, BUT LIKE THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, IT FAILED OF COMPLETELY ~~HITTING ITS MARK.~~ ^{accomplish its objective} THE NEGROES OF THE SOUTH WERE LEGALLY FREED, BUT THEY REMAINED SECOND CLASS CITIZENS IN THE SOUTH. THEY WERE SET FREE, BUT THEY WERE NOT GIVEN THE SPECIAL KIND OF TREATMENT NECESSARY TO HELP A ~~PEOPLE~~ PEOPLE ACCUSTOMED TO SLAVERY TO ~~GROW INTO~~ GROW INTO RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP. AMERICANS SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT THE MARK OF GENERATIONS OF SLAVERY WOULD DISAPPEAR ONCE THE WAND OF EMANCIPATION WAS WAVED OVER THE SLAVES. LEFT TO THEIR OWN INADEQUATE RESOURCES, MOST OF THE NEGROES SOON THREW THEMSELVES UPON THE SOUTHERN WHITES IN AN APPEAL OF DEPENDENCY, AND VERY LITTLE WAS CHANGED EXCEPT A ~~TOKEN LEGALITY~~ ^{altered in the Southland}

IN THE AMERICA OF 1965, WE ~~ARE~~ ARE REAPING THE HARVEST OF AMERICAN ERRORS FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR. THURSDAY'S NEWSPAPER SHOWS A HELMETED SHERIFF FROM SELMA, ALA., LEADING A GROUP OF NEGRO SCHOOL CHILDREN ON AN ENFORCED MARCH OUT INTO THE OPEN COUNTRY. THE CHILDREN HAD COME TO THE COURT HOUSE IN SELMA TO PROTEST RESTRICTIONS AGAINST NEGRO ~~VOTING~~ VOTING REGISTRATION. THE SHERIFF DECIDED TO PLAY THE ~~SARCASTIC~~ ^(spiteful) GAME OF ~~LEADING~~ ^{FORCING} THE PICKET LINE TO MARCH AFTER HIM. AT FIRST THE SHERIFF WAS ON FOOT HIMSELF. LATER, HE GOT INTO A CAR, AND THE CHILDREN HAD TO RUN BEHIND THE CAR. ^{NO KINDLY PIED PIPER WAS HE.}

SUCH IS FREEDOM IN AMERICA, 1965 STYLE. IT IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE FACT, THAT THE SEARCH FOR HUMAN FREEDOM IN OUR COUNTRY IS ~~INCOMPLETE.~~ ^{not ended} THE WISE MAN UNDERSTANDS THAT A THREAT TO ANY MAN'S FREEDOM IS A THREAT TO HIS OWN. ALL MEN ARE EQUAL UNDER THE LAW, OR NO ONE IS EQUAL. LINCOLN HIMSELF SAID THESE WORDS IN ~~1863~~ 1858:

" I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW - TAKING THIS OLD DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WHICH DECLARES THAT ALL MEN ARE EQUAL UPON PRINCIPLE, AND MAKE EXCEPTION TO IT - WHERE WILL IT STOP? IF ONE MAN SAYS IT DOES NOT MEAN A NEGRO, WHY NOT ANOTHER SAY IT DOES NOT MEAN SOME OTHER MAN? "

IF we make one exception to the principle that all men are equal - where will the exceptions stop? IF the Decl. of Independence did not include the Negro, whom else did it exclude? "

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The Wise Men understands that a threat to another man's freedom is a threat to his own.

AS WE PROCEED INTO THIS MONTH OF FEBRUARY, KNOWN TRADITIONALLY AS BROTHERHOOD MONTH, WE MIGHT WELL TAKE COGNIZANCE OF THE FACT THAT BROTHERHOOD MEANS A GREAT DEAL MORE THAN WE USED TO THINK THAT IT MEANT. IT MEANS NOT ONLY THAT WE JEWS SHOULD SEEK THE UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES BETTER THAN US, BUT THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO LIFT UP THOSE ^{whome} WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO ~~THINK~~ AS BEING OF LESS VALUE THAN OURSELVES.

consider

The recent civil rights legislation passed by the Congress has given the American Negro a 2nd chance: after his initial emancipation at the end of the Civil War, the Negro ~~to~~ ~~had~~ received no help in his attempt to ~~concretize~~ concretize his hypothetical freedom. The issue is the same today as it was in 1865. Unless we help the Negro to raise himself, he will remain unliberated + chained to his past.

The enslavement of the Negro produced the ^{exorbitantly} destructive Civil War. The delay in giving the Negro the practical opportunity that go w/ freedom - has produced the discord of modern times. "Peace", taught the Rabbi, "is the wages of Justice". If we wish peace, we cannot fail to serve as allies to our dark-skinned brethren.