

1865

**Proceedings of the City Council of Baltimore: in Relation to the
Death of Abraham Lincoln, Late President of the United States.**

Baltimore, Maryland. City Council.

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*M. Magham
#388.*

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE
IN RELATION TO THE DEATH OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
LATE
PRESIDENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES.

Saml A Ewalt

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,
IN RELATION TO THE DEATH OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
LATE
PRESIDENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES.

RESOLUTION authorizing the printing of the proceedings of the City Council in relation to the death of President Lincoln.

Resolved by both branches of the City Council of Baltimore, That the Clerks of the Councils be and are hereby directed to have five hundred copies of the proceedings of the Council in reference to the death of President Lincoln, together with the addresses of Messrs. Hatch, Cox and Valiant, printed in neat pamphlet form.

FIRST BRANCH.

PROCEEDINGS.

SPECIAL SESSION.

FIRST BRANCH.

Saturday, April 15, 1865.

The Branch met in special session this afternoon at four o'clock, in pursuance to a summons from his Honor, the Mayor.

Present—JAMES YOUNG, Esq., President, and all the members.

John F. Plummer, Esq., Secretary to the Mayoralty, appeared and presented the following communication :

MAYOR'S OFFICE—CITY HALL,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

*To the President and Members of the
First and Second Branches City Council :*

GENTLEMEN :

We are called upon to mourn in sadness the death of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States.

Mr. Lincoln has had no equal since the days of Washington in all those traits of character which adorn the human mind. His patriotism and devotion to the Union were only equaled by his Christian charity, kindly feelings and forgiving disposition.

This afflicting dispensation is the ruling of an all-

wise Providence, who moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. A nation mourns his loss in grief and sadness.

It shall be my mournful privilege to unite with you in paying marked respect to the memory of the deceased.

Very respectfully,

JOHN LEE CHAPMAN, *Mayor*.

Mr. Ewalt moved that a message be sent to the Second Branch proposing, with their concurrence, the reference of the above communication from his Honor, the Mayor, to a joint special committee, which was determined in the affirmative.

The following message was received from the Second Branch :

IN SECOND BRANCH,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

Gentlemen of the First Branch :

We respectfully inform you that we have concurred in your proposition to refer the message of his Honor, the Mayor, in relation to the death of the President of the United States, to a joint special committee, and name on the part of this Branch Messrs. Moore, Burch and Nalls.

By order,

WM. S. CROWLEY, *Clerk*.

The President named Messrs. Wayson, Keyser and Evans as the committee on the part of this Branch.

The committee then withdrew, and after a short absence returned and through their chairman, Mr. Wayson, submitted the following report and resolutions :

The joint special committee, to whom was referred the communication from his Honor the Mayor,

in relation to the assassination of the President, respectfully submit the following preamble and resolutions.

GEO. W. WAYSON,
C. C. KEYSER,
JOHN EVANS,
First Branch.

J. FARIS MOORE,
THOS. B. BURCH,
BENJ. F. NALLS,
Second Branch.

Whereas the sad intelligence has been communicated to the City Council of Baltimore by his Honor, the Mayor, of the base assassination of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States; and

Whereas, all must feel that the mournful event is a national calamity calculated to cast a gloom, deep and harrowing, over the heart of every lover of his country; and

Whereas, it becomes the duty of the corporate authorities of this city to give expression to their heartfelt sorrow at the unexpected and startling death of one who held so pre-eminent a position in the affections of a great nation—one who seemed to have been destined by the Great Author of Events for the special mission assigned him; and

Whereas, in the fulfillment of that great mission he has been removed from his sphere of usefulness; therefore

Resolved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, That we bow with resignation to this sad calamity, and trust to the inscrutable wisdom of Providence to bring light out of darkness, and sanctify this deep affliction to the welfare of the nation.

Resolved, That a committee of three members of each Branch be appointed to act in conjunction with his Honor the Mayor, for the purpose of making suitable arrangements to attend the funeral ceremonies of the late President of the United States, and that the Mayor, members of the Council, and the heads of the departments attend the funeral.

Resolved, That his Honor the Mayor be requested to issue a proclamation requesting the citizens to drape their flags and places of business in mourning until after the funeral.

Resolved, That in token of sorrow and respect for the memory of the deceased, the members of the Council and the corporate authorities wear the usual badge of mourning on the left arm, and that the Clerks of the respective Branches be and they are hereby directed to have the chambers of both Branches draped in mourning for the space of thirty days.

Mr. Hatch moved that the preamble and resolutions be read a second time, by special order, which was determined in the affirmative, and the resolutions adopted.

The above preamble and resolutions were returned by the Second Branch endorsed "concurring in."

Mr. Hatch, on making the motion for a second reading of the above resolutions, delivered the following remarks:

Mr. President and Gentlemen:—We meet this evening with saddened hearts and tearful eyes. The nation's chief has fallen, and fallen by the assassin's hand. The people mourn his loss, for he was beloved by the pure and good, and was enshrined in their heart of hearts. "Oh! what a fall was that

my countrymen !' to a people elated with the prospects of a bright-eyed peace once more blessing the land with joy and gladness and fraternal feeling ; to a people who have for four long years of civil feuds and bloody strife, quaffed and quaffed the poisoned cup of sorrow until grief almost become the normal condition of our natures ; when all of this was changed for joy and gladness, and the sunny future broke upon our vision with a resurrection of a new and more beautiful life—when we were about to gather in the vintage of the glorious harvest which stern necessity and affliction had prepared us to enjoy. Oh, it was in an hour of ecstasy and joy like this that the poisoned chalice was again raised to our unwilling lips, and we were doomed to drink the bitter dregs, and the morrow's happiness that beamed upon a nation's hopes, thrilled the public heart with confidence and filled the soul with prayer and gratitude was changed, and changed to what? A country amazed with horror and dismay ; a land filled with grief and sorrow, clothed and draped in the habiliments of mourning ; the people in sack-cloth and ashes offering up their sad lamentations for the loss of their honored and revered chieftain.

The melancholy death of our wise, pure and good President is as astounding and lamentable to our sense of honor as it is touching to the feelings that stir up the deep affections of our souls. Oh! my countrymen, what a spectacle to behold! A patriot's deeds defamed by treacherous sons; a patriot's life struck down by ruthless hands, and all that we loved and revered blasphemed against and warred upon. The people's choice, the people's pride, in the zenith of his usefulness and glory, struck down in death, not by a conqueror's arm, not by a deed of

chivalry worthy of a soldier's fame, but he fell by the assassin's hand ; by the base ingratitude of those who should have loved him most. Oh, my countrymen, weep ! The occasion is worthy of your grief. Why was not the poisoned lips that muttered treason first struck dumb with death ? Why was not the mind that first engendered or conceived his ruin struck phrenzied with the damning thought, and blasted, with its fountains withered up, ere it was given birth ? Why was not the heart that harbored such ingratitude as to wish him despoiled of his life, of his greatness and his glories, paralyzed, annihilated, or if suffered to live, to live in misery, to live with fiends, with nought to feed upon but the memory of guilt, to mock him in his desolation for the ruin he has made ? But false hearts and treacherous wills, or upraised hands, will never strike down the name, the memory of his glorious acts ; they will live enshrined in the hearts of a grateful people. For the people know too well that the name and acts of Abraham Lincoln are inseparably affixed to our nationality, that they must live or expire together. And so long as human freedom has an abiding place on earth, the friends of liberty will acknowledge him the greatest of all benefactors to the human race ; and immortality will claim his deeds and name second to none in the world's great history of time.

As lovers of our great nationality we mourn his loss, and feel the poignancy of grief that now overshadows the land and fills every patriot heart ; and every patriot's soul has sent with fervency the supplication to the throne of heaven, "Oh, God, would that this cup of affliction could have passed by !"

America, thy loss is felt from shore to shore,
 And each echoes back in mournful strains,
 Thy pride, thy boast, thy honored chief's no more.

Mr. Cox, in seconding the motion for a second reading of the above resolutions, delivered the following remarks :

Mr. President:—A sad blow has smitten the heart of the nation. We all felt the shock with the first news of the early morning, and a dull heavy weight of sorrow oppressed us. We looked out upon the sky, and clouds obscuring the sunlight, were shedding tears over the nation's loss. Our President is dead. The news fell upon us like the sound of a mighty oak falling in the stillness of the forest. He to whom all eyes were turned with hope ; he who had so safely guided us through the tempests of the last four years, and carried us past the breakers into a sea of calmness, is suddenly taken from the helm of State. Well may we imagine the dismay that was pictured on the countenances of those who saw the pilot stricken down, and the increasing horror as they gazed upon the death-smitten features of him who was the hope of millions. But a few days ago our bells rang out the cheerful notes of victory, and the hopes of an early peace : those same bells to-day proclaim our nation's loss, our nation's woe.

We feel all of one family, gathered together by a common calamity, and mourning the loss of one to whom we all looked as to a parent, whose eye watched over us continually for our good. Our brothers and sisters all over our land mourn with us this day. We are tendered by affliction, and all differences are forgotten, for the hearts of all are desolate, and our nation mourns. We mourn for ourselves ; we mourn for our common country ; but most of all for those who wandered off from the family altar, and turned their backs in anger upon us. They have lost their best friend. He who would have welcomed them back

to the ark of safety, to the homes of their youth and early associations—who would have killed the fatted calf and prepared a feast for the prodigals; who would have gone out, with open arms, to meet them, and welcome them to the banquet and the feast, is suddenly cut off from the midst of life and usefulness, with much of his high purpose for good unaccomplished, and purposes of good, too, to those who had reviled him, and had warred against the life of the nation. Shall another arise in his stead to hold out to them the olive branch of peace? Will another follow in his footsteps of kindness and mercy to the erring, and go forth from his high position to meet them and invite them to take shelter under the old banner of their country? We fear not; for, as it was said of Washington, so may we say of our fallen President, “two Abraham Lincolns live not in one age!” But yesterday he was the hope and pride of our nation, and the admiration of the world. His early revilers were the most ready to speak his praise; and now, when the clouds which encircled him were drifting off and he stood high in the bright sunlight of the world, he is suddenly stricken down by an assassin’s hand, and lies weltering in his own blood. How sudden and how awful the change—from the summit of earthly glory to the dreary and silent tomb. No conqueror was ever more fortunate than he, for he conquered the prejudices and passions of millions, and made them his willing and devoted friends. No victor was more splendid nor hero more brave, for he achieved victories over the hearts of his people; and his heroic purpose required more bravery to withstand the assaults of his enemies at home and abroad than is needed by the conqueror who triumphs over a thousand battle fields; but death, in an unexpected, un-

timely hour has closed the scene forever. Throughout our wide domain the lightning has flashed the terrible truth, and to-day thirty millions of people have one common thought and one common cause for sadness. Our flags are draped in funeral garb; our warehouses, offices and dwellings evidence our bereavement; the steamers, as they plow our noble rivers, bear with them the ensign of mourning, and a universal sadness pervades our land from the forest bordered streams of Maine to the waters of Mexico.

“Death has sought out and smitten a lofty victim; there is wailing in high places, and mourning through the land.” Let us then bow in humble submission to the Divine will, and confidently trust in the dispensations of His providence, believing that out of seeming evil may flow a stream for the healing of the nation.

On motion of Mr. Jones, the remarks made by Messrs. Hatch and Cox were ordered to be printed upon the Journal.

Mr. Wayson offered the following resolution:

Resolved by the both branches City Council of Baltimore, That the Mayor be requested to issue his proclamation requesting the citizens to close their places of business on the day of the funeral, and that the bells be tolled from ten o'clock A. M. to three o'clock P. M.

Mr. Hatch moved to amend the resolution by adding to the end thereof the words “and the Board of Police Commissioners be requested to close all places of amusement and drinking saloons until after the funeral,” which was determined in the negative.

The question being on the adoption of the original resolution, it was adopted.

The following message was received from the Second Branch :

IN SECOND BRANCH,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

Gentlemen of the First Branch :

We respectfully inform you that we have appointed Messrs. Moore, Burch and Nalls as the committee on the part of this Branch to make arrangements for attending the funeral of the late President of the United States.

By order,

WM. S. CROWLEY, *Clerk.*

The President named Messrs. Wayson, Keyser and Evans as the committee on the part of this Branch.

Mr. Evans submitted the following letter and resolution :

To Mrs. ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

Washington, D. C.:

MADAM:—The Mayor and City Council of Baltimore profoundly sympathize with you in the mysterious Providence that has been permitted to overtake you in the sudden and unlooked for loss of your *illustrious husband*,—the *kind father*,—the *nation's friend!*

When death in any form enters and takes from the family circle one of its members, it is accompanied with sadness and sorrow. The melancholy privilege of ministering to the wants of the suffering companion, during the period that disease may be accomplishing its fatal work, naturally inclines the mind to contemplate the result and almost imperceptibly schools it to realize the parting with the loved ones.

But to be called upon to part with them under the afflictive surroundings which it has been your lot to

realizè, brings grief and sadness. If in our power we would cheerfully apply the balm to soothe your sorrowing heart and relieve it of the heavy burden which is pressing it down. We would dry up the burning tears of the family which has thus suddenly been left without a father. But, alas! how vain the effort to stay the tears of affection! Yet, we will mingle our voices and our prayers in unity with millions of our beloved countrymen, and implore in your behalf and in behalf of your family the Divine blessing that He, who has promised to be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless, may have you in His keeping, and that you may be sustained in the responsible position which you must necessarily assume in taking charge of the family which has been deprived of its father and protector.

Resolved by both branches of the City Council of Baltimore, That the Mayor be requested to have a copy of the above suitably prepared and sent to Mrs. Lincoln.

On motion of Mr. Hatch, the resolution was read a second time, by special order, and adopted.

The above resolution was returned by the Second Branch endorsed "concurrèd in."

On motion of Mr. Stuart, the Branch adjourned.

By order,

GEO. W. BROOKS, *Clerk.*

SECOND BRANCH.

PROCEEDINGS.

SPECIAL SESSION.

SECOND BRANCH.

Saturday, April 15, 1865.

The Branch met this afternoon at four o'clock, in pursuance of a summons from his Honor, the Mayor.

Present—DANIEL HARVEY, Esq., President, and all the members, except Mr. Taylor.

The following message from his Honor, the Mayor, was received from the First Branch and read :

MAYOR'S OFFICE—CITY HALL,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

*To the President and Members of the
First and Second Branches City Council :*

GENTLEMEN :

We are called upon to mourn in sadness the death of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States.

Mr. Lincoln has had no equal since the days of Washington in all those traits of character which adorn the human mind. His patriotism and devotion to the Union were only equaled by his Christian charity, kindly feelings and forgiving disposition.

This afflicting dispensation is the ruling of an all-wise Providence, who moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. A nation mourns his loss in grief and sadness.

It shall be my mournful privilege to unite with you in paying marked respect to the memory of the deceased.

Very respectfully,

JOHN LEE CHAPMAN, *Mayor.*

The following message was received from the First Branch :

IN FIRST BRANCH,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

Gentlemen of the Second Branch :

We respectfully propose, with your concurrence, the reference of the accompanying communication from his Honor, the Mayor, to a joint special committee, and name as the committee on the part of this Branch, Messrs. Wayson, Keyser and Evans.

By order,

GEORGE W. BROOKS, *Clerk.*

On motion of Mr. Moore, the proposition contained in the message was concurred in.

The President appointed Messrs. Moore, Burch and Nalls as the committee on the part of this Branch.

The following report and resolutions were received from the First Branch and read :

The joint special committee, to whom was referred the communication from his Honor the Mayor, in relation to the assassination of the President, respectfully submit the following preamble and resolutions.

GEO. W. WAYSON,
C. C. KEYSER,
JOHN EVANS,
First Branch.

J. FARIS MOORE,
THOS. B. BURCH,
BENJ. F. NALLS,
Second Branch.

Whereas the sad intelligence has been communicated to the City Council of Baltimore by his Honor, the Mayor, of the base assassination of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States; and

Whereas, all must feel that the mournful event is a national calamity calculated to cast a gloom, deep and harrowing, over the heart of every lover of his country; and

Whereas, it becomes the duty of the corporate authorities of this city to give expression to their heartfelt sorrow at the unexpected and startling death of one who held so pre-eminent a position in the affections of a great nation—one who seemed to have been destined by the Great Author of Events for the special mission assigned him; and

Whereas, in the fulfillment of that great mission he has been removed from his sphere of usefulness; therefore

Resolved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, That we bow with resignation to this sad calamity, and trust to the inscrutable wisdom of Providence to bring light out of darkness, and sanctify this deep affliction to the welfare of the nation.

Resolved, That a committee of three members of each Branch be appointed to act in conjunction with his Honor the Mayor, for the purpose of making suitable arrangements to attend the funeral ceremonies of the late President of the United States, and that the Mayor, members of the Council, and the heads of the departments attend the funeral.

Resolved, That his Honor the Mayor be requested to issue a proclamation requesting the citizens to drape their flags and places of business in mourning until after the funeral.

Resolved, That in token of sorrow and respect for

the memory of the deceased, the members of the Council and the corporate authorities wear the usual badge of mourning on the left arm, and that the Clerks of the respective Branches be and they are hereby directed to have the chambers of both Branches draped in mourning for the space of thirty days.

On motion of Mr. Burch, the resolutions were read a second time, by special order, and, after appropriate remarks by Mr. Valiant, concurred in.

The President appointed Messrs. Moore, Burch and Nalls as the committee on the part of this Branch to act in conjunction with his Honor, the Mayor, to make arrangements for attending the funeral of the late President of the United States.

The following message was received from the First Branch :

IN FIRST BRANCH,
Baltimore, April 15, 1865.

Gentlemen of the Second Branch :

We respectfully inform you that we have appointed Messrs. Wayson, Keyser and Evans as the committee on the part of this Branch to make arrangements for attending the funeral of the late President of the United States.

By order,

GEORGE W. BROOKS, *Clerk.*

On motion of Mr. Moore, the Branch adjourned.

By order,

WILLIAM S. CROWLEY, *Clerk.*

REMARKS OF Mr. VALIANT.

Mr. President and Brother Members of the Branch:

We have assembled under circumstances in which the American people have never been placed. A nation to-day mourns the loss of her Chief Magistrate. The President has fallen—fallen by the hand of the assassin. Abraham Lincoln, the just, wise, true patriot and philanthropist—he who had for more than four years guided the good old ship of State through the icebergs of the rebellion, the breakers, the shoals, and the shifting sands of secession; who had wisdom sufficient in her guidance and ability to steer between the rocks of danger and hazard, and to reach the port of victory, is no more! To have such a man, and at such a time, and in such a manner, torn from us, is a dispensation we hardly know how to meet. It behooves us as Christians, however, to bow to the decrees of an All-wise Providence, and acknowledge His supremacy in all things, for we, ignorant of ourselves, often crave our own harm, which He denies for our good. And, Father of Mercies, forgive our faithlessness, for we feel it hard, in the present dispensation, to look to Thee and say and feel that all things work together for good. Yes, a great man has fallen! The nation mourns! Gloom surrounds us. The tolling of the bells, the habiliments of mourning which meet the eye from every point, the serious and sober countenances of the people, all betoken that some extraordinary dispensation of Providence has taken place. I hope, sir, the grief with which we have all been stricken has been caused

by the ravings of a madman, and not the calculations and plans of a body of men, (I will not call them citizens, they would not be worthy the appellation, and they would, indeed, scarcely deserve the name of men.) I say, sir, I hope this may prove to be the case, for it is the first time in the nation's history that her Chief Magistrate has been stricken down by the hand of violence. He, of all others, should have been privileged to go when and wherever he pleased; to have mingled with the people and partake of their pleasures; feeling assured that in every individual he met he recognized a body guard. The assassination of emperors and kings is, in most instances, horrible enough; but the murder of a President of the United States—a man of our own selection, and who, during the term of his office at least, should be sacred to the heart of every true American—language cannot properly portray its enormity; I will not attempt it. Let us strive, however, with all our power to put down popular excitement, to maintain our own dignity and the city's good name, and assist the present Chief Magistrate of the nation in the support of the Constitution and the laws.

