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President Lincoln and General Grant on Peace and War

Abraham Lincoln

John T. Mills

Ulysses S. Grant

Bayard Taylor

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PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND GENERAL GRANT ON PEACE AND WAR.

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT.

MR. LINCOLN'S VIEW OF DEMOCRATIC STRATEGY.

The *Grand County* (Wis.) *Herald* contains a very interesting letter from Hon. John T. Mills, Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, giving an account of a recent interview with Mr. Lincoln, with a report of the remarks of the latter in regard to the consequences which would follow the adoption of the war policy urged by the friends of Gen. McClellan.

Judge Mills was accompanied by ex-Gov. Randall, of Wisconsin, who introduced him to the President, and whom he warmly thanks for his readiness to serve his friends from Wisconsin at the Capital. They found the President at the Soldiers' Retreat, a "building not imposing in size, half hidden in foliage, the grounds tastefully laid out."

The Governor asked of a man in waiting if the President had arrived. "Yes," was the reply. We entered a neat plainly furnished room. A marble table was in the centre. Directly appeared from an adjoining apartment, a tall, gaunt-looking figure, shoulders inclined forward, his gait astride, rapid and shuffling, ample understandings, with large slippers, and Briarian arms, with a face radiant with intelligence and humor.

The Governor addressed him: "Mr. President, this is my friend and your friend, Mr. Mills from Wisconsin."

"I am glad to see my friends from Wisconsin; they are the hearty friends of the Union."

"I could not leave the city, Mr. President, without hearing words of cheer from your own lips. Upon you, as the representative of the loyal people, depend as we believe, the existence of our government and the future of America." This introduced political topics.

"Mr. President," said Governor Randall, "why can't you seek seclusion, and play hermit for a fortnight? It would reinvigorate you."

"Aye," said the President, "two or three weeks would do me no good. I cannot fly from my thoughts — my solicitude for this great country follows me where ever I go. I don't think it is personal vanity or ambition, though I am not free from those infirmities, but I cannot but feel that the weal or woe of this great nation will be decided in November. There is no programme offered by any wing of the Democratic party but that must result in the permanent destruction of the Union."

"But Mr. President, General McClellan is in favor of crushing out the rebellion by force. He will be the Chicago Candidate."

"Sir," said the President, "the slightest knowledge of Arithmetic will prove to any man that the rebel armies cannot be destroyed with Democratic strategy. It would sacrifice all the white men of the North to do it. There are now in the service of the United States near 200,000 able-bodied colored men, most of them under arms, defending and acquiring Union territory. The Democratic strategy demands that these forces be disbanded, and that the masters be conciliated by restoring them to slavery. The black men who now assist Union prisoners to escape, they are to be converted into our enemies in the vain hope of gaining the good will of their masters. We shall have to fight two nations instead of one."

"You cannot conciliate the South if you guarantee to them ultimate success; and the experience of the present war proves their success is inevitable if you fling the compulsory labor of millions of black men into their side of the scale. Will you give our enemies such military advantages as insure success, and then depend on coaxing, flattery and concession to get them back into the Union? Abandon all the posts now garrisoned by black men, take 200,000 men from our side and put them in the battle-field or corn-field against us, and we would be compelled to abandon the war in three weeks."

"We have to hold territory in inclement and sickly places; where are the Democrats to do this? It was a free fight, and the field was open to the War Democrats to put down this Rebellion by fighting against both master and slave, long before the present policy was inaugurated."

"There have been men base enough to propose to me to return to slavery the black warriors of Port Hudson and Olustee, and thus win the respect of the masters they fought. Should I do so, I should deserve to be damned in time and eternity. Come what will I will keep my faith with friend and foe. My enemies pretend I am now carrying on this war for the sole purpose of abolition. So long as I am president, it shall be carried on for the sole purpose of restoring the Union. But no human power can subdue this Rebellion without the use of the emancipation policy, and every other policy calculated to weaken the moral and physical forces of the Rebellion."

"Freedom has given us 200,000 men raised on Southern soil. It will give us more yet. Just so much it has subtracted from the enemy, and instead of alienating the South, there are now evidences of a fraternal feeling growing up between our men and the rank and file of the Rebel soldiers. Let my enemies prove to the country that the destruction of slavery is not necessary to a restoration of the Union. I will abide the issue."

I saw that the President was not a mere joker, but a man of deep convictions, of abiding faith in justice, truth and Providence. His voice was pleasant, his manner earnest and emphatic. As he warmed with his theme his mind grew to the magnitude of his body. I felt I was in the presence of the great guiding intellect of the age, and that those "huge Atlantean shoulders were fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies." His transparent honesty, republican simplicity, his gushing sympathy for those who offered their lives for their country, his utter forgetfulness of self in his concern for its welfare, could not but inspire me with confidence that he was Heaven's instrument to conduct His people through this sea of blood to a Canaan of peace and freedom. J. T. MILLS.

LETTER OF GENERAL GRANT.

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,
CITY POINT, VA., AUG. 16, 1864. }

HON. E. B. WASHBOURNE.

DEAR SIR: I state to all citizens who visit me that all we want now to ensure an early restoration of the Union is a determined unity of sentiment North. The Rebels have now in their ranks their last man. The little boys and old men are guarding prisoners, guarding railroad bridges, and forming a good part of their garrisons for entrenched positions. A man lost by them cannot be replaced. They have robbed alike the cradle and the grave to get their present force. Besides what they lose in frequent skirmishes and battles, they are now losing from desertions and other causes at least one regiment per day. With this drain upon them the end is not far distant if we will only be true to ourselves. Their only hope now is in a divided North. This might give them reinforcements from Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland and Missouri, while it would weaken us. With the draft quietly enforced, the enemy would become despondent and would make but little resistance. I have no doubt but the enemy are exceedingly anxious to hold out until after the Presidential election. They have many hopes from its effects. They hope a counter revolution; they hope election of a Peace candidate, in fact, like Micawber, they hope for something to turn up. Our peace friends, if they expect peace from separation, are much mistaken. It would be but the beginning of war, with thousands of Northern men joining the South because of our disgrace in allowing separation. To have "peace on any terms," the South would demand the restoration of their slaves already freed. They would demand indemnity for losses sustained, and they would demand a treaty which would make the North slave-hunters for the South. They would demand pay or the restoration of every slave escaping to the North.

Yours truly,

U. S. GRANT.

ON THE CHICAGO SURRENDER.

What! hoist the white flag when our triumph is nigh?
What! crouch before Treason? make Freedom a lie?
What! spike all our guns when the foe is at bay
And the rags of his black banner dropping away?
Tear down the strong name that our nation has won,
And strike her brave bird from his home in the sun?

He's a coward who shrinks from the lift of the sword;
He's a traitor who mocks at the sacrifice poured;
Nameless and homeless the doom that should blast
The knave who stands idly till peril is past,
But he who submits when the thunders have burst
And victory dawns, is of cowards the worst!

Is the old spirit dead? Are we broken and weak,
That cravens so shamelessly lift the white cheek
To court the swift insult, nor blush at the blow,
The tools of the Treason and friends of the foe!
See! Anarchy smiles at the peace which they ask,
And the eyes of Disunion flash out through the mask!

Give thanks, ye brave boys, who by vale and by crag
Bear onward, unfaltering, our noble old flag!
Strong arms of the Union, heroes living and dead,
For the blood of your valor is uselessly shed!
No soldier's green laurel is promised you here,
But the white rag of "sympathy" softly shall cheer!

And you, ye war martyrs! who preach from your graves
How captives are nursed by the masters of slaves,
Or, living, still linger in shadows of Death,—
Puff out the starved muscle, recall the faint breath,
And shout, till those cowards rejoice at the cry:
"By the hands of the Union we fought for, we die!"

By the God of our Fathers! this shame we must share,
But it grows too debasing for freemen to bear,
And Washington, Jackson, will turn in their graves
When the Union shall rest on two races of slaves,
Or, spurning the spirit which bound it of yore,
And sundered, exist as a nation no more!

BAYARD TAYLOR.

"Everybody wondered what could be his plan, but still they did not question his ability; and even half-misgiving minds kept hurrahing for him to their neighbors, like the school-boy in the church-yard, to sustain their own waning faith. We, among the rest, suspecting all objection to him as disloyal, helped to dominate down the grumblers, and insisted, that, in due time, his intentions would be wisely developed to the nation. But we never once suspected (nor did the public who so faithfully supported him) that his plan was to let the insignificant forces of the enemy retire without harm, until, with a generous inversion of the art of war, he could seek him in his lair, and accept the odds against himself."