

Executive Mansion,

Washington, August 22, 1862.

Hon. Horace Greeley:

Dear Sir =

= I have just read yours of the
19th addressed to myself through the New-
York Tribune. If there be in it any statements,
or assumptions of fact, which I may know to be
erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert
them. If there be in it any inferences which
I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not
now and here, argue against them. If there
be perceptible in it an impatient and dic-
tatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an
old friend, whose heart I have always sup-
posed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing" as you
say, I have not meant to leave any one in
doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it
the shortest way under the Constitution. The

sooner the national authority can be restored,
the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it
was". ~~Broken eggs can never be mended, and~~
~~the longer the breaking process, the more will~~
~~be broken~~ - If there be ^{those} ~~any~~ who would not
save the Union, unless they could at the
same time save slavery, I do not agree with
them. - If there be ^{those} ~~any~~ who would not save
the Union unless they could at the same time
destroy slavery, I do not agree with them.

My paramount object in this struggle is to
save the Union, and is not either to save
or to destroy slavery. - If I could save the
Union without freeing any slaves I would do
it, and if I could save it by freeing all
the slaves I would do it; and if I could
save it by freeing some and leaving others
slaves I would also do that. What I do
about slavery, and the colored race, I do
because I believe it helps to save the Union;

and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would keep to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will keep the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so far as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. Lincoln