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President Johnson's Policy.

Delegations from the States of New York and Maine, to Washington, received the following reply from President Johnson:

I need not say, gentlemen, how deeply grateful I am to you and the influential and eminent citizens whom you represent, for the words of encouragement and confidence which you have spoken. Such a manifestation of regard would at any time be acceptable, but at the present time it finds in my heart the warmest response. You will not expect of me, under existing circumstances, any extended declaration of my public affairs. My past life must be the guarantee of my future course. And if on the principles which have heretofore guided my action as a public man, there is not found a sufficient earnest of those which, with the blessing of God, will direct my course in dealing with the great public questions which are now coming up for determination, no profession that I should now make, no declarations of policy that I should lay down, would command your respect or insure your confidence. Yet there are some points which stand out so prominently that none can hesitate to yield a ready assent to their force and truth. Our great and good President has been stricken down by the hand of an assassin. Every one will agree that arson is a crime, and must be punished. No one will deny that murder is a crime, and must meet its just penalty. All will concur in awarding to the assassin the punishment of his crime. But if the assassin of the President is not to escape deserved punishment, what shall be done to those who have attempted the assassination of the republic—who have compassed the life of the nation? The lessons must be taught beyond the possibility of ever being unlearned that treason is a crime—the greatest of human crimes. Yet in exercising the high prerogative which devolves upon me, I shall, if I know myself, temper justice with mercy. I shall not forget, however, I trust, that while the exercise of mercy is easy and pleasant, mercy to the individual is often a source of the greatest misery to the mass of the people. Every question, as it arises, must be disposed of according to the circumstances which shall surround it at the time. The quiet and orderly manner in which the hiatus created by the death of the Chief Magistrate of the nation, so suddenly, and by so terrible a stroke, has been closed up in the peaceful working of the Constitution, is a sure guarantee that the strength and wisdom of the people and of their Government will be found equal to every emergency that may arise.

Had any one, four years ago, undertaken to predict the wonderful events which have happened during the great struggle through which we have passed, his utterance would have been classed with the stories of the 'Arabian Nights,' and the tale of the 'Wonderful Lamp.' So, while it is not for us to anticipate what may recur in the future, we are sustained by an abiding faith in the Divine Being, and by a sure confidence that the great principles of government and freedom, which have been vindicated by our success hitherto will be secured and perpetuated in the midst of all the vicissitudes through which it may be our fortune yet to pass. I thank you, gentlemen, again, for your kind expressions of confidence. Certain I am, that while the responsibilities which devolve upon me might have fallen upon many possessed of far more ability to meet and fulfil them, yet no one can approach them with a more sincere desire, or a more honest determination, to discharge them with a view solely to the welfare of the people and the peace and prosperity of the nation.

On motion of one of the gentlemen, the report was unanimously adopted.

The Ohio delegation received an answer, which, together with a speech in reply to the delegation of the Christian commission, follows below:

RESPECTED SIR: I might adopt all that you have said on this occasion, and present it as mine. I respond most cordially, and endorse every sentiment you have uttered; and I might thus conclude what I have to say in a much better manner than I can otherwise express it, adopting your remarks as my reply to yourself. The sad calamity, the afflicting occurrence of the assassination of the President of the United States, is not more deeply felt by any one than myself; and especially so while I occupy the position I do, being thrown into it by that sad event. And in entering upon the discharge of the duties that are imposed on me in the office thus conferred, I feel and know the responsibility, and have on various occasions felt as it were overwhelmed; and I stand before you to-day embarrassed exceedingly as to how the responsibility shall be fulfilled. Hence the importance and value of the encouragement that you give here to-day. The countenance tendered me, and the support you propose in an undertaking so fearful, and responsible as the one in which I enter, is duly appreciated, for in the midst of this embarrassment—in the midst of this great national calamity—in starting upon the career I must pursue—the confidence, the countenance, the encouragement and the promise that you will aid the instrument that has been thrown where he is, in the discharge of his duties, is worth a

great deal to any one, and especially to myself. As I remarked but a short time since, lack of support may paralyze the most courageous; but the encouragement, countenance and support of an intelligent people is calculated to make even a coward courageous, and to win merit in the discharge of his duties. I repeat, that I most fully respond to all that you have said, and concur most fully, especially in the idea that this Government has been sent on a mission, and that the mission has not been fulfilled, and that the history of this country shall demonstrate that this nation, as it moves along down the stream of time, is to be permanent as the sun.

I start, sir—though it may be considered by some as a kind of wild enthusiasm or superstition—with the idea that this Government was founded by our fathers upon a great principle of right—that it was founded upon the principles of free government proper, with the essentials and leading principles running through it. It was sent here upon a great mission, which has not yet been fulfilled; but in its onward and upward course it will carry out its mission, and establish the great principle of free government not only here but throughout the civilized world. I believe, in the midst of my superstition, if it may be called such, or, in other words, I have a reliance and abiding faith, that there is a great principle of right which lies at the foundation of all things. I believe that time will come when this nation, instead of being the recipient, it has been for a considerable length of time, of arts, or sciences, and of religion from the other quarters of the globe, and of emigrants of every kind and of every complexion, will become the radiating point, the centre from which will proceed arts, science and religion to our brothers throughout the civilized world. We have been sent on a great mission and that mission must be fulfilled. We look at this gigantic rebellion, and see that the Government has struggled with it and carried it along; and just at the time we believe, and substantially know, that the rebellion was about to be ended, and the nation was rejoicing, with its banners unfurled and its artillery thundering through every town and hamlet throughout the length and breadth of the confederacy—then, in the midst of jubilant feelings and the exultation of a free people, the chief magistrate is struck like a star from its sphere, in death. Here we receive an intimation of the eternal principle that sent forth this Government—the Government rejoicing on the one hand a rebellion crushed, and on the other mourning at its chief slain; and though presidents may give way in regular succession, still this Government will move on, and in the end carry out its mission among the nations.

I cannot but say, and in saying so it is a mere repetition of what has been expressed before, that the time has come with this Government when crime shall be understood. We are taught in all the States, and even in the courts of the United States, that the commission of various offenses are crimes. Arson is a crime, burglary is a crime, murder is a crime. The time has come when the people shall be educated and taught to understand that treason is a crime. And not only a crime, but the highest of crimes. We look upon the assassination of the President—this diabolical and fiendish act which has been recently committed—as the highest crime; and the mind cannot conceive the penalty commensurate with it. It is a deed for which the human mind cannot invent a penalty severe enough. To assassinate the President. The assassins, in the garb and shape of treason, have lifted their impious arms against the Government under which they live. I will say, in this connection in reference, as you have just remarked, as to my future policy, that if my past course upon various public questions that have come up, and especially since this rebellion commenced, is any indication or evidence to you of what my future will be, any professions now must be unnecessary. So far as regards my action in the disposition or winding up this great drama, my past life must be taken as some indication of my future. In the progress of this question, in bringing it to a close, when justice is meted out, and it becomes necessary to exercise mercy and lenience, we shall be sure to discriminate and ascertain what is mercy, because sometimes mercy, misconceived and exercised improperly, results in ruin of States and men.

If it is right and proper to take away the life of one individual for destroying that of another, what shall be done with those who destroy the life of the nation? Treason must be punished as the highest crime known to the law. Some have committed treason, technically speaking. Thousands and thousands have been taken from their homes upon one cause or other; sometimes by conscription, sometimes by force of public opinion, sometimes misled by leaders. I would say, in the exercise of mercy, try to make the proper discrimination; visiting the penalties of treason on the conscious, intelligent, misleading traitor, and extending leniency to the great mass of the deceived. Gentlemen, all I can say, and all I can promise you after referring to my past, that in ascertaining what my future will be in the discharge of my duties in the administration of the Government, all will be done in a proper spirit, I think, and in accordance with my best ability. There may be some who would perform those duties with more signal ability than I can; but there is one thing, sir, of which I assure you and this audience, that whatever be the evidence of my past life or though I may not bring to the administration of this Government that signal

ability that some might, I have an honest will and impulse sincere. I have labored the most of my life—yes, the vigor and strength of my life have been expended in those directions which have been calculated to bring about the greatest good to the greatest number. I have labored incessantly to maintain and carry out the great idea that government was made for man, and not man for the Government. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

I toiled to establish and make that great idea permanent as this Government. I have labored to establish this idea. I shall not desist from that. I have labored to advance and ameliorate the condition of the great mass of men and, God willing, with your help, as far as in me lies, in the administration of this Government, it shall be my future object. Then, gentlemen, and you, sir, please accept my acknowledgments, my sincere thanks, for the countenance and encouragement rendered me on this occasion, and my reiteration that though I may not discharge my duties as some might, yet still I do so honestly and sincerely. I thank you for the kind attention you have paid me.

ANOTHER SPEECH FROM THE PRESIDENT

Directly after the delegations had retired the President received a large number of delegates of the Christian Commission, temporarily residing in Washington. The Rev. Mr. Borden, of Albany, delivered a brief but eloquent and impressive address, saying that they recognized him as called, in the Providence of God, to have rule over the nation; that in the past public services of the President they had their foundation of hope for the future; and now, as they looked on the face of his illustrious predecessor, whose death had moved the country to tears, they believed that God had sent him, as Moses, to lead the people and his successor, as Joshua, to give them a land of promise; that in the administration of justice mercy would follow the success of our arms; their prayer was for an enduring peace and all the blessings of free government.

The President replied that such were his feelings. In consequence of the late afflicting events he could not respond in appropriate terms. He, however, acknowledged his thanks for kind sentiments expressed. Although he might fail, he would promise that he would undertake to perform grave and responsible duties devolving upon him with all the zeal of an honest heart. He had knowledge of and appreciated the offices of the Christian Commission. He always had an abiding faith in the people, and looked on the Government as based upon the principles of human rights. The nation's mission is not yet completed. It is in our hands. When we look at the country's condition it gives a complete contradiction in the assumption of our enemies. In the midst of treason and rebellion we find that we will triumph at last. Although we have had a civil war which has covered the land with gloom, and while the entire country was rejoicing over the triumph of the struggle, there has been an assassination the most atrocious and diabolical the world has ever witnessed.

While the nation was jubilant the Chief Magistrate was stricken down like a star from its sphere. An interregnum, a hiatus, was created in the Government. In France, for instance, under similar circumstances, there would have been scenes of anarchy. But not so here, where the Government is founded on justice and right. We have developed the great truth that it is strong enough to preserve its existence while suppressing all public disorders within our widely extended limits. Government is made for the people, and not the people for the Government. He was not sectarian; he claimed a charity co-extensive with the human family. He believed, in the language of another, that religion in an arch of promise, spanning humanity, with its ends resting on the horizon. Religion is seen in its acts more than its profession, and good deeds never fail to receive recognition.

He then repeated his sentiments regarding his future political course, similar to those addressed to the Illinois delegation, saying the time had come when intelligent men like those before him should exert their moral influence in erecting a standard by which everybody should be taught to believe that treason is the highest crime known to the law, and that the perpetrator should be visited with the punishment which he deserves.

The State of South Carolina, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT. COLUMBIA, May 22, 1865.

To the People of South Carolina:

I HAVE this day received information of an order issued by Major-General Q. A. Gillmore. I deem it proper, without delay, to present to you for your information, such portions thereof as affect me and concern you: because they create for you a conflict with the forces of the United States, which can only be avoided by my forbearance to exercise the functions of the Executive Department of the State:

HEADQUARTERS DEPT. OF THE SOUTH, HILTON HEAD, S. C., May 15, 1865. GENERAL ORDERS NO. 63.

1. The proclamation of A. G. Magrath, styling himself Governor of South Carolina, dated at Headquarters, Columbia, South Carolina, May 2, 1865, declaring that all subsistence stores and the property of the Confederate States within the limits of the State should be turned over and accounted for by the agents of the State, appointed for that purpose, and directing that the substance and other stores shall be used for the relief of the

people of the State: and the proclamation of Joseph E. Brown, styling himself Governor of Georgia, dated at the capital of that State, on the 24th day of May, 1865, requiring the officers and members of the General Assembly to meet in extraordinary session at the Capitol in Milledgeville, on Monday, the 22d day of May, 1865; and the proclamation of A. K. Allison, styling himself Acting Governor of Florida, dated at Tallahassee, on the 8th day of April, 1865, giving notice and direction that an election will be held on Wednesday, the 7th day of June, 1865, for Governor of the State of Florida; are, each and all of them, declared null and void, it having become known to me, from trustworthy information, that the aforesaid A. G. Magrath, Joseph E. Brown and A. K. Allison, are disloyal to the United States, having committed sundry and diverse acts of treason against the same, in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort.

The persons and people to whom the proclamations hereinabove referred to have been respectively addressed, are, therefore, enjoined and commanded to give no heed whatever thereto, or to any orders, proclamations, commissions or commands emanating from persons claiming the right to exercise the functions and authority of Governor in either of the States of South Carolina, Georgia or Florida, unless the same shall have been promulgated by the advice or consent of the United States authorities.

II.
III. District and Post Commanders throughout this Department will at once cause this order to be circulated far and wide, by special couriers or otherwise, and will take such steps to secure its enforcement as may by them be deemed necessary.

Q. A. GILLMORE,

Major General Commanding.

Official: G. F. McKay, 1st Lieut. and A. A. General.

I cannot, under all the circumstances which surround you, expose you to the consequences which will be produced because of any effort on my part—fruitless, if not mischievous, as it must be—to exercise those functions which you in your confidence have committed to me. Nor am I willing that, without such consequences to you, while in the Executive Chair of the State; I shall be held forth to the world charged with crime; without the most positive declaration, that I am ready to meet and repel it, wherever and by whomsoever made.

In that peculiar condition of our affairs, which is now disclosed to you, I feel that my duty, whether considered in regard to myself as your Executive, or to you as a people whose welfare is dear to me, is at once plain and imperative. I will not introduce within this State discord or contention. I will not allow myself to furnish the occasion by which a single atom of suffering can be added to that load which now weighs so heavily upon you. I will not give opportunity for conflict between the Government of this State and the Government of the United States. The functions, therefore, of the Executive are suspended by me from this day.

Under other circumstances and at other times, I would pause in doing that which I now do without hesitation, and with a perfect conviction that it is due to you that it should be done. The exercise of the executive power in the proclamation of the 2d May, 1865, which was complained of, has been rectified and the proclamation recalled. Before my letter was received containing the explanation of the circumstances which led to the proclamation, these orders have been issued; in which, because of "trustworthy information" of "disloyalty" and "sundry and diverse acts of treason," the functions of the Governor of the State are suspended and his authority denied. To exercise my functions in the face of these orders, is to invoke force to sustain me in opposition to that which will be displayed against me. Such a contest could have but one result. While to these in the State who would give their support to the Executive, there must come penalties and suffering, without the possibility of advantage.

Whatever, therefore, may be the feeling which belongs to me as a man or a citizen, in a case like this; where conviction precedes the hearing, and sentence comes before the trial; I feel that it becomes me to be mindful of the considerations which involve your peace and affect your welfare. I have said to you before, I say to you now, the war is over; hostilities have ceased; and it is your duty to forbear opposition which is hopeless—contest which is unavailing—and reconcile to yourselves that submission which the Government of the United States can impose, and you cannot resist.

While the considerations, which I have now expressed lead me to this forbearance in the exercise of the functions of the Executive Department of the State, I owe it to myself, to you, to the State, the Legislature of which according to the Constitution of this State, elected me the Governor of the State, to make my protest against the power claimed and exercised by Gen. Gillmore. It involves a question which concerns not alone this State, but all the States of the United States. It affirms a principle which it is not necessary now for me to discuss.

Whatever may be your condition, unavailing resistance on your part will but make it worse. With an earnestness, of the sincerity of which I need not give you assurance, I urge upon you the resumption of your peaceful pursuit, and the adaptation of yourselves to those changes which may be made in your condition. Do not be misled by excitement; give no heed to passion; deal resolutely with facts; look the truth calmly in