

# THE CHARGER

September, 2007

444th Meeting

Vol. 29 #1

*Tonight's Program:*

## The Lincoln - Douglas Debates: A Reenactment

The debates between Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln were held during the 1858 campaign for a US Senate seat from Illinois. The debates



were held at seven sites throughout Illinois, one in each of the seven Congressional Districts.

Douglas, a Democrat, was the incumbent Senator, having been elected in 1847. He had chaired the Senate Committee on Territories. He helped enact the Compromise of 1850. Douglas then was a proponent of Popular Sovereignty, and was responsible for the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. The legislation led to the violence in Kansas, hence the name "Bleeding Kansas"

Lincoln was a relative unknown at the beginning of the debates. In contrast to Douglas' Popular Sovereignty stance, Lincoln stated that the U.S. could not survive as half-slave and half-free. The Lincoln-Douglas debates drew the attention of the entire nation. Although Lincoln would lose the Senate race in 1858, he would beat Douglas out in the 1860 race for the US Presidency.

## George Buss

George Buss is a native of Freeport, Illinois. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Stephen Douglas Association of Chicago, and is a former president, the Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin, and the Lincoln-Douglas Society of Freeport. He is also a charter member of the Lincoln Forum.

George has been appearing as Abraham Lincoln since 1989, when a friend authored the script for "A Discussion with President Lincoln and Judge Douglas." He has portrayed Lincoln for many audiences. Tonight, he and his partner will reenact the Lincoln-Douglas debates for us.

**Date: Wednesday,  
September 12, 2007**

**Place: The Cleveland  
Playhouse Club  
8501 Carnegie Ave.**

**Time: Drinks 6 PM  
Dinner 7 PM**

**Reservations: Please Call  
JAC Communications  
(216) 861-5588**

**Meal choice: Grilled Texas Sirloin  
or Vegetarian Ravioli**

## CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

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Editor - THE CHARGER - Dan Zeiser

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1982 John Harkness	

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### SEPTEMBER, 2007

The 51st campaign of the Roundtable into the Civil War is off to a fast start. First of all, thanks to the good work of Dan Zeiser and Paul Burkholder, The Charger went online. This will be faster and more economical for the Roundtable. Second, on September 12, two of the featured speakers for the year, George Buss and partner will reprise the Lincoln-Douglas Debates. Third, on September 27-30 we take our annual Field trip to Chickamauga and Chattanooga. We will be guided by Ranger/Historian Jim Ogden, who is highly respected in Civil War circles. Details for the trip are below.

See you on Sept. 12

Sincerely,

Terry Koozer

September 27 - Leave for Chickamauga/Chattanooga. If anyone needs a ride, please contact Terry Koozer. We will have dinner with Jim Ogden Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Captain's Quarters Bed & Breakfast, where some will be staying. You can also make reservations at the Super 8 Motel at 1-706-861-1744.

September 28 - We will tour the Chickamauga National Battlefield. At night we will dine at a local eatery.

September 29 - We will see Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. At night we will dine at another restaurant.

September 30 - Return to Cleveland.

Come join us for a fun and informative trip.

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE  
2007/2008 SCHEDULE**

September 12, 2007

**The Lincoln-Douglas Debates:  
A Reenactment**



**George  
Buss**

October 10, 2007

**Brevet Brigadier General James B.  
Barnett of the 1st Cleveland Light Ar-  
tillery and the Firing of the First Land  
Canon Shots of the War**

**Marge Wilson**

November 14, 20067

**George Thomas at  
the Battle of  
Chickamauga**

**Dan Zeiser**



December 12, 2007



**Nathan Bedford  
Forrest:  
Napoleonic  
Cavalryman**

**Greg Briggs**

January 9, 2008

**The Annual Dick Crews  
Debate**

*The Confederate Victory of 1865:  
Was the Confederacy a Viable  
State*

**Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey**

February 13, 2008

**A Civil War Quiz**

**Presented by  
Brian Kowell**



March 12, 2008

**Raid!: The Confed-  
eracy Comes to St.  
Albans, Vermont**



**William F. B. Vodrey**

April 9, 2008

**Jesse James: The  
Last Rebel**

**Mel Maurer**



May 14, 2008

**The USS Kearsarge vs.  
the CSS  
Alabama  
John Fazio**



## THE PROCLAMATION THAT SAVED A NATION

### INTRODUCTION

© 2007 John Fazio First of a Series

The Emancipation Proclamation is perhaps the strangest document in American history; strange because it is susceptible of at least three interpretations that appear to be mutually exclusive, but are not, and strange because its genesis is equally enigmatic, with at least three solid reasons offered for it. The only thing not strange about it is its effects, North, South, and abroad, immediate and long term. It won the war, preserved the United States as one nation, and ended slavery. Quite a lot for a one page document. How could this be?

### I. GENESIS

#### A. The Moral Imperative

##### 1. Lincoln

Some historians and students of the period are fond of pointing to this or that statement made by Lincoln prior to emancipation that evidences his unwillingness to think of the negro as an equal, a refusal to accept him or her as such, and a refusal to interfere with the institution of slavery in those states of the union where it already existed. These statements are easily explained in terms of political expediency, i.e., that to a degree, Lincoln, as with all politicians, was playing to his audience and the convictions he knew they held. A careful reading of the literature and his record demonstrates beyond any doubt his abhorrence for the institution of slavery and his desire and intention to do something about it if and when he could, but not in such a way as to effect a cure that would be worse than the disease, which is to say to lose the Union in the process of destroying human bondage in that Union. If we want to know what Lincoln really felt about the institution, it is enough to know that the Southern leaders of his day announced in advance that if he were elected to the Presidency they would secede from the Union, and also to know that upon the fulfillment of that condition they promptly did so.

##### 2. The Abolitionists

In addition to his personal imperative regarding the peculiar institution, Lincoln was under pressure from abolitionists who, though their hostility to slavery was no greater than his, appeared to be more principled than he because they openly advocated immediate and total freedom for all slaves regardless of consequences. Thus, men like William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, John Greenleaf Whittier and Frederick Douglass, and women like Harriet Beecher Stowe and Susan B. Anthony, could and did question the anti-slavery credentials of a President who in their eyes moved so slowly on the issue. These people were anything but stupid Americans. They were, in fact, very bright. But they either did not know, or did not care, that precipitate and comprehensive action of the kind they advocated would very likely result in the loss of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri to the Confederacy, border states whose loyalty to the government had, in some cases, been assured by Lincoln only by heavy-handed and even extra-Constitutional means and therefore remained precarious. Lincoln knew and cared a great deal about the border states because he realized that to lose them was to lose the war, the Union, and, at least for the foreseeable future, emancipation.

##### 3. The Radicals

From the radicals in his own party, too, came pressure. The South did not have a monopoly on fire-eaters. There were just as many in the North, but of a different stripe. Men like Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania in the House, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Benjamin Wade of Ohio in the Senate, and Salmon P.

Chase, Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury, spoke often and forcefully against the "evil" of slavery, made almost daily visits to the White House, and demanded that steps be taken as quickly as possible to assure the extinction of "the harlot, slavery." Faced with secession of their southern brethren, they steadfastly opposed compromise of any kind with "the Slave Power." As with the abolitionists, these men were intelligent and dedicated, but, whereas the abolitionists' altruism was unalloyed, the Radical Republicans' was somewhat diluted by a strain of personal animus against slaveholders.

#### 4. Commanders in the Field

On at least three occasions prior to Lincoln's issuance of the Proclamation, the fear of loss of one or more border states to the Confederacy forced him to countermand, and in one case to sack the author of, orders of his commanders in the field who had taken it upon themselves to liberate slaves in their areas of command. These commanders were General Benjamin Butler, in command of Fort Monroe, Virginia, General John C. Fremont, Commander of the Union Army in St. Louis (who was sacked), and General David Hunter, commanding the Department of the South.

#### 5. Lincoln Redux

It was left to Lincoln to steer a safe and sane path between and around extremes, to wend his way through the forest of conflicting interests and ideologies. He did not have the luxury of being a radical, a conservative, or a liberal. He knew what he wanted - Union and Emancipation - but he knew, too, that he could accomplish both only in the fullness of time. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at flood, leads on to fortune" (said Shakespeare in Julius Caesar). None knew it better than Lincoln. None made decisions, based on that truism, with greater sagacity. None, ultimately, had better results.

But there was another factor that separated Lincoln from his abolitionist and radical Republican contemporaries. Like them, he detested slavery. Unlike them, he did not detest the slaveholders. As he so often did, Lincoln put himself in the place of his adversary and imagined that he would behave about the same if he had been a product of the same circumstances. It was for these reasons that he explored measures short of war, i.e., colonization, return to Africa, gradual emancipation with compensation, and action by individual states, to deal with slavery, the issue that had bedeviled the Union since its inception.

### **B. Issuance as War Measure**

Lincoln issued his Proclamation as a war measure, i.e., under his Constitutional authority as Commander in Chief of the Union armies, as to which he had a plenary concept (Art. II, Section 2). He did so for several reasons. First, he believed that the Constitution did not otherwise empower him to interfere with the institution of slavery in those states in which it already existed. Second, he had tried and failed to persuade the border states to voluntarily and gradually free slaves within their jurisdictions with compensation to slaveholders from the Federal Government. Indeed, in December, 1862, after he had issued his Proclamation, but before its effective date, he proposed a Constitutional Amendment that

would authorize Congress to compensate slaveowners in those states that agreed to legislate slavery out of existence. When he realized that the border states would not accept gradual emancipation, he resolved to accomplish what he could with the military edict that he had already prepared in the event of such refusal. He was convinced that the tide had reached flood stage, that events, foreign and domestic, required a bold stroke and that to fail to act, and quickly, was to risk catastrophe. Thus, he resorted to his Constitutional war powers.

In what sense was the Proclamation a war measure? In several senses. In the second paragraph it refers to the preliminary Proclamation of September 22 wherein it is stated that "...the executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons (i.e. slaves in those states or parts of states whose people were in rebellion against the United States)..." Accordingly, the slaves encountered by conquering Union armies in those states or parts of states previously in rebellion were free men and women who could never again be enslaved by any person under the jurisdiction of the United States. Further, and still alluding to the preliminary Proclamation, Lincoln unequivocally invoked the war powers of the Constitution for his authority, i.e., "...by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States." Still further, in the same paragraph, he makes the purpose of the Proclamation as a war measure crystal clear, i.e., "...and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion..."

So that there will be no mistake about his authority, purpose, or intent, and now no longer alluding to the Proclamation of September 22, he restates all three in the sixth paragraph:

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated states and parts of states are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

In the eighth paragraph he announces that newly freed slaves will be accepted into the armed service of the United States for non-combat duty and "to man vessels of all sorts in said service." Again, in the final paragraph, he refers to the Proclamation as an act "...warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity." The Proclamation was made as a military measure, and as a military measure it worked.

**John Fazio is the immediate past president of the Roundtable. Currently, he serves as an Executive Committee member. John is an attorney and frequent contributor to the Charger.**

The next part of the series will examine several topics, including possible foreign intervention by England, France, and Russia. It will include the events surrounding Lincoln's publication of the Proclamation and the document itself. John also provides several interpretations of the Proclamation and analyzes each one. He then discusses the effects the document had on various constituencies, such as the slaves, the armies, foreign nations, and its political fallout. It ends with a discussion of the Thirteenth Amendment.



## 2007 Field Trip Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park September 27-30

Join us for this year's Field Trip to Chickamauga and Chattanooga. We will leave on Thursday, September 27 to travel to Chattanooga. We will have dinner that night with our guide, who will give us an overview of what we will see the next two days. On Thursday, we will tour the site of the Battle of Chickamauga, where George H. Thomas earned his nickname, the Rock of Chickamauga. On Saturday, we will learn about the ensuing Battle of Chattanooga. We will tour Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, where the Confederate Army of Tennessee was routed. We will return on Sunday, September 30.

The Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park was the first such park, created in 1890. The Chickamauga Battlefield contains 5,200 acres, while Chattanooga comprises over 3,000 acres. Chickamauga was the last major Confederate victory in the west. The battlefield is large and relatively pristine. The park is graced by 1,400 monuments, second only to Gettysburg. Come join us for a fun learning experience.



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For details, contact Terry Koozer at 216-226-7527 or [sakoozer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sakoozer@sbcglobal.net).

### Bring a Book!

We are always in need of books or prints for the monthly raffles and quiz. Perhaps each of us has a book or two that we have read and no longer need or want. If so, please bring it (or them) to the September meeting.



**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE  
DUES STATEMENT — 2007-2008**

Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Active  \$40.00  
Family  \$60.00  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Student/  \$20.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Out of town  
\_\_\_\_\_ (over 150 miles)

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Please consider an additional donation to the Roundtable: \_\_\_\_\_ \$5; \_\_\_\_\_ \$10  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (other). Thank you.

Send this to Dennis Keating, Treasurer, 2191 Middlefield Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106 or bring it to the September 12th meeting.