

LINCOLN LORE

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LINCOLN'S LAST MESSAGE TO THE 38th CONGRESS

Very little attention has been paid to Lincoln's last message to Congress dated December 6, 1864 because it is largely statistical in contents and lacks the usual literary gems which adorn most of Lincoln's state papers. Nevertheless, the fact that the document was Lincoln's last formal report on the state of the union makes it of some importance. Its length prohibits little more than a brief outline of its contents with one or two paragraphs submitted as a conclusion and the brief salutation as follows:

"Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives: Again the blessings of health and abundant harvests claim our profoundest gratitude to almighty God."

I FOREIGN AFFAIRS

"The condition of our foreign affairs is reasonably satisfactory."

1. Mexico—Theatre of Civil war
2. Costa Rica & Nicaragua—Transit Route
3. Colombia—Intimate Relations
4. Venezuela—New liberal institution
5. Peru & Spain—Civil war averted
6. Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Paraguay, San Salvador & Haiti—Most friendly relations
7. Liberia—African slave trade
8. Europe—Overland telegraph
9. Great Britain—Ocean telegraph
10. Egypt, Barbary Powers—Satisfactory relations
11. China—Rebellion suppressed
12. Japan—Friendship for U.S.
13. Foreign merchants—Contraband trade
14. Brazilian & British Ports—Political difficulty
15. Great Britain—Treaty adjustments
16. Canada—Reciprocity Treaty
17. European States—Immigrants

II FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

"The financial affairs of the government have been successfully administered during the last year."

1. Increased taxation proposed by Congress.

2. Receipts during war—\$1,394,796,007.62
Disbursements, same basis—\$1,298,056,101.89
Balance in treasury—\$96,739,905.73
3. Source of receipts
4. Disbursements for civil service
5. The Public Debt—\$1,740,690,489.49
6. National banking system

III REPORTS

1. Secretary of War. A document accompanying message. (See conclusion of address)
2. Secretary of Navy.
 - a. 671 vessels carrying 461 guns
 - b. 51,000 men in naval service
 - c. Total expenditures from March 4, 1861 to Nov. 1, 1864—\$238,647,262.35
 - d. Construction of navy yard
 - e. New Rank of Vice Admiral
3. Postmaster General
 - a. Postal revenue for year \$12,438,253.78
 - b. Expenditures—\$12,644,786.20
 - c. Deficit—\$206,532.42
 - d. Ocean mail steamships

IV SECRETARY OF INTERIOR

1. Population scarcely been checked
2. Admission of Nevada consummated
3. Territories show rapid growth
4. Public Lands—4,221,342 acres located
5. Pacific Railroad progress
6. Minerals mined valued at \$100,000,000
7. Reorganization of Indian system
8. Pensions for soldiers and sailors
9. District of Columbia institutions

V AGRICULTURE

1. Peculiarly, the people's department

VI CONDUCT OF WAR

1. All important lines and positions steadily advanced
2. General Sherman's operations most remarkable feature

VII ORGANIZING LOYAL STATE GOVERNMENTS

1. Arkansas & Louisiana successful
2. Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee at work
3. Maryland, completely successful
"The genius of rebellion will no more claim Maryland. Like another foul

spirit, being driven out, it may seek to tear her, but it will woo her no more."

VIII SLAVERY

1. Proposed amendment to Constitution.
 - a. "I venture to recommend the reconsideration and passage of the measure at the present session."
 - b. "The common end is the maintenance of the union, and among the means to secure that end—constitutional amendment."

IX POPULAR ELECTIONS

1. Most reliable indication of public purpose.
2. "No candidate for any office whatever, high or low, has ventured to seek votes on the avowal that he was for giving up the union."
3. Election proved we do not approach exhaustion in man power.

X NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE WITH INSURGENTS

1. "It is an issue which can only be tried by war, and decided by victory.
2. "They can at any moment have peace by laying down their arms and submitting to the national authority under the Constitution.
3. "The executive power itself would be greatly diminished by the cessation of actual war.
4. "The door of pardon and amnesty has been for a full year open to all except such as were not in condition to make free choice."
5. "I repeat the declaration made a year ago that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress.

"If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an executive duty to re-enslave such persons, another, and not I, must be their instrument to perform it.

"In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it."

Abraham Lincoln