

the States; and the inference is that Mr. Lincoln intends to carry this slavery agitation into Congress with the view of amending the Constitution so that slavery can be abolished in all the States of the Union.

In other words, he is not going to allow one portion of the Union to be slave and another portion to be free; he is not going to permit the house to be divided against itself. He is going to remedy it by lawful and constitutional means. What are to be these means? How can he abolish slavery in those States where it exists? There is but one mode by which a political organization, composed of men in the free States, can abolish slavery in the slaveholding States, and that would be to abolish the State legislatures, blot out of existence the State sovereignties, invest Congress with full and plenary power over all the local and domestic and police regulations of the different States of this Union. Then there would be uniformity in the local concerns and domestic institutions of the different States; then the house would be no longer divided against itself; then the States would all be free, or they would all be slave; then you would have uniformity prevailing throughout this whole land in the local and domestic institutions : but it would be a uniformity, not of liberty, but a uniformity of despotism that would triumph. I submit to you, my fellow-citizens, whether this is not the logical consequence of Mr. Lincoln's proposition.

I have called on Mr. Lincoln to explain what he did mean, if he did not mean this, and he has made a speech at Chicago in which he attempts to explain. And how does he explain? I will give him the benefit of his own language, precisely as it was reported in the Republican papers of that city, after undergoing his revision:

I have said a hundred times, and have now no inclination to take it back, that I believe there is no right and ought to be no inclination in the people of the free States to enter into the slave States and interfere with the question of slavery at all.

He believes there is no right on the part of the free people of the free States to enter the slave States and interfere with the question of slavery, hence he does not propose to go into Kentucky and stir up a civil war and a servile war between the blacks and the whites. All he proposes is to invite the people of Illinois and every other

free State to band together as one sectional party governed and divided by a geographical line to make war upon the institution of slavery in the slaveholding States. He is going to carry it out by means of a political party that has its adherents only in the free States,--a political party that does not pretend that it can give a solitary vote in the slave

totally unsuited to the planting regions of the Carolinas, of Georgia, and of Louisiana. Each State is supposed to have interests separate and distinct from each and every other; and hence must have laws different from each and every other State, in order that its laws shall be adapted to the condition and necessities of the people.

Hence I insist that our institutions rest on the theory that there shall be dissimilarity and variety in the local laws and institutions of the different States, instead of all being uniform; and you find, my friends, that Mr. Lincoln and myself differ radically and totally on the fundamental principles of this Government. He goes for consolidation, for uniformity in our local institutions, for blotting out State rights and State sovereignty, and consolidating all the power in the Federal Government, for converting these thirty-two sovereign States into one empire, and making uniformity throughout the length and breadth of the land. On the other hand, I go for maintaining the authority of the Federal Government within the limits marked out by the Constitution, and then for maintaining and preserving the sovereignty of each and all of the States of the Union, in order that each State may regulate and adopt its own local institutions in its own way, without interference from any power whatsoever. Thus you find there is a distinct issue of principles--principles irreconcilable--between Mr. Lincoln and myself. He goes for consolidation and uniformity in our government; I go for maintaining the confederation of the sovereign States under the

Constitution as our fathers made it, leaving each State at liberty to manage its own affairs and own internal institutions.

Mr. Lincoln makes another point upon me, and rests his whole case upon these two points, His last point is, that he will wage a warfare upon the Supreme Court of the United States because of the Dred Scott decision. He takes occasion, in his speech made before the Republican convention, in my absence, to arraign me, not only for having expressed my acquiescence in that decision, but to charge me with being a conspirator with that court in devising that decision three years before Dred Scott ever thought of commencing a suit for his freedom. The object of his speech was to convey the idea to the people that the court could not be trusted, that the late President could not be trusted, that the present one could not be trusted, and that Mr. Douglas could not be trusted; that they were all conspirators in bringing about that corrupt decision, to which Mr. Lincoln is determined he will never yield a willing obedience.

He makes two points upon the Dred Scott decision.

"Spot the law."] Yes, he is going to spot the law. The court pronounces that law prohibiting slavery, unconstitutional and void, and Mr. Lincoln is going to pass an act reversing that decision and making it valid. I never heard before of an appeal being taken from the Supreme Court to the Congress of the United States to reverse its decision. I have heard of appeals being taken from Congress to the Supreme Court to declare a statute void. That has been done from the earliest days of Chief Justice Marshall down to the present time.

The Supreme Court of Illinois do not hesitate to pronounce an Act of the legislature void, as being repugnant to the Constitution, and the Supreme Court of the United States is vested by the Constitution with that very power. The Constitution says that that judicial power of the United States shall be vested in the Supreme Court and such inferior courts as Congress shall, from time to time, ordain and establish. Hence it is the province and duty of the Supreme Court to pronounce judgment on the validity and constitutionality of an Act of Congress. In this case they have done so, and Mr. Lincoln will not submit to it, and he is going to reverse it by another Act of Congress of the same tenor. My opinion is that Mr. Lincoln ought to be on the Supreme Bench himself, when the Republicans

get into power, if that kind of law knowledge qualifies a man for the bench.

But Mr. Lincoln intimates that there is another mode by which he can reverse the Dred Scott decision. How is that? Why, he is going to appeal to the people to elect a President who will appoint judges who will reverse the Dred Scott decision. Well, let us see how that is going to be done. First, he has to carry on his sectional organization, a party confined to the free States, making war upon the slave-holding States until he gets a Republican president elected. [Voice: "He never will, sir."] I do not believe he ever will. But suppose he should; when that Republican president shall have taken his seat (Mr. Seward, for instance), will he then proceed to appoint judges? No! he will have to wait until the present judges die before he can do that; and perhaps his four years would be out before a majority of these judges found it agreeable to die; and it is very possible, too, that Mr. Lincoln's senatorial term would expire before these judges would be accommodating enough to die. If it should so happen; I do not see a very great prospect for Mr. Lincoln to reverse the Dred Scott decision.

But suppose they should die, then how are the new judges to be appointed? Why, the Republican president is to call upon the candidates and catechise them, and ask them, "How will you decide this case if I appoint you judge?" Suppose, for instance, Mr. Lincoln to be candidate for a vacancy on the Supreme Bench to fill Chief Justice Taney's place, and when he applied to Seward, the latter would say, "Mr. Lincoln, I cannot appoint you until I know how you will decide the Dred Scott case?" Mr. Lincoln tells him, and he then asks him how he will decide Tom Joneses case, and Bill Wilson's case, and thus catechises the judge as to how he will decide any case which may arise before him. Suppose you get a Supreme Court composed of such judges, who have been appointed by a partisan president upon their giving pledges how they would decide a case before it arose,-- what confidence would you have in such a court? Would not your court be prostituted beneath the contempt of all mankind? What man would feel that his liberties were safe, his right of person or property was secure, if the Supreme Bench, that august tribunal, the highest on earth, was brought down to that low, vulgar pool where it would be the case?

I say to you, fellow-citizens, that I have no warfare to make upon the Supreme Court because of the Dred Scott decision. I have no complaints to make against that Court because of that decision. My private opinions on some points of the case may have been one way; and on other points of the case another; in some things concurring with

that is a matter of taste with them. If they think so in that State, and do not carry the doctrine outside of it, and propose to interfere with us, I have no quarrel to make with them. It is their business. There is a great deal of philosophy and good sense in a raying of Fridley of Kane, Fridley had a law suit

before a justice of the peace, and the justice decided it against him. This he did not like and standing up and looking at the justice for a moment, "Well, Squire," said he, "if a man ar

legislature. He will put them on an equality with the white man. What then? Of course, after making them eligible to the judiciary, when he gets Cuffee elevated to the bench, he certainly will not refuse his judge the privilege of marrying any woman he may select!

I submit to you whether these are not the legitimate consequences of his doctrine? If it be true, as he says, that by the Declaration of Independence and by divine law, the negro is created the equal of the white man; if it be true that the Dred Scott decision is unjust and wrong, because it deprives the negro of citizenship and equality with the white man,--then does it not follow that if he had the power he would make negroes citizens, and give them all the rights and all the privileges of citizenship on an equality with white men? I think that is the inevitable conclusion. I do not doubt Mr. Lincoln's conscientious conviction on the subject, and I do not doubt that he will carry out that doctrine if he ever has the power: but I resist it because I am utterly opposed to any political amalgamation or any other amalgamation on this continent.

We are witnessing the result of giving civil and political rights to inferior races in Mexico, in Central America, in South America, and in the West India Islands. Those young men who went from here to Mexico to fight the battles of their country in the Mexican war can tell you the fruits of negro equality with the white man. They will tell you that the result of that equality is social amalgamation, demoralization, and degradation below the capacity for self-government.

My friends, if we wish to preserve this Government we must maintain it on the basis on which it was established; to-wit, the white basis. We must preserve the purity of the race not only in our politics, but in our domestic relations. We **must** then preserve the sovereignty of the States, and we must maintain the Federal Union by preserving the Federal Constitution inviolate. Let us do that, and our Union will not only be perpetual, but may extend until it shall spread over the entire continent.

Fellow-citizens, I have already detained you too long. I have exhausted myself and wearied you, and owe you an apology for the desultory manner in which I have discussed these topics. I will have an opportunity of addressing you again before the November election comes off. I come to you to appeal to your judgment as

American citizens, to take your verdict of approval or disapproval upon the discharge of my public duty and my principles as compared with those of Mr. Lincoln. If you conscientiously believe that his principles are more in harmony with the feelings of the

(<https://niu.edu/>)

NIU Home (<https://niu.edu/>)

Apply to NIU (<https://niu.edu/apply/index.shtml>)

Visit Campus (<https://niu.edu/visit/index.shtml>)

Directions/Maps (<https://niu.edu/visit/maps/>)

Contact Us (<https://niu.edu/contactinfo.shtml>)

Emergency Information (<https://niu.edu/emergencyinfo/>)

Accessibility (<https://niu.edu/accessibility.shtml>)

Jobs @ NIU (<https://niu.edu/employment/>)

NIUHuskies.com (<https://niuhuskies.com>)

©2016 Board of Trustees of
Northern Illinois University (<https://niu.edu/>).
All rights reserved.
Web Site Privacy Policy (https://doit.niu.edu/doit/policies/privacy_policy.shtml)

1425 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-1000 | univinfo@niu.edu (<mailto:univinfo@niu.edu>)