

**MR. LINCOLN RALLIES LOGAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS,  
IN HIS FIRST NAMESAKE TOWN ON OCTOBER 16, 1858**

**A ONE-ACT PLAY IN THREE SCENES**

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**CAST**

(roughly in order of appearance)

REPUBLICAN DELEGATIONS in period costume from the Logan County seat of Lincoln and various other Logan county communities, especially Atlanta, Elkhart, and Mt. Pulaski

INDIVIDUAL SPECTATORS in period costume (men, women, and children) in wagons and carriages, on horseback, and on foot. SPECTATORS include A FEW BLACK MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN.

THIRTY-TWO YOUNG LADIES DRESSED IN WHITE, RIDING IN CARRIAGES

A BRASS BAND (includes a bass drum that the drummer beats as cued in the script)

A GREETING COMMITTEE consisting of local dignitaries who appear at the train depot and on the speaker's platform:

ROBERT B. LATHAM, age 40, one of the founders of Lincoln, Illinois, and member of the town board in 1858. MR. LATHAM may be accompanied by MRS. LATHAM, age 22.

SAMUEL C. PARKS, age 38

JOHN D. GILLETT, age 39, a founding father of Lincoln, Illinois. He is accompanied by his oldest daughter, EMMA SUSAN, age 13, who sits next to her father on the platform during the speech. She could be one of the 32 YOUNG LADIES DRESSED IN WHITE.

WILLIAM WALKER, Republican candidate for the Illinois state legislature and supporter of Abraham Lincoln

E. BOWMAN, president of the town board (1858--59)

A PRESENT-DAY NARRATOR (male or female)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, age 49

A BLACK MALE WAGON DRIVER

A SCHOOL CHOIR, ADULT CHOIR, or SOLOIST. (A suggested soloist is Ms. Debbie Ross, a former resident of Lincoln, IL, and current resident of Springfield, IL. She sang "The Star-Spangled

Banner" when Barack Obama announced his Presidential candidacy on the steps of the Old Illinois State Capitol. Ms. Ross is employed at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.)

A REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR GROUP OF AT LEAST 3 (the more, the better; for vocal effects in Scenes 2 and 3, and separate from the REPUBLICAN DELEGATIONS from various towns)

A DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR GROUP OF AT LEAST 3 (the more, the better; for vocal effects in Scenes 2 and 3)

A VOCAL DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR

A VOCAL REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR

A VOCAL WHIG SPECTATOR

NOTES: THE DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR, THE REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR, AND THE WHIG SPECTATOR play extremely important roles in this re-enactment, so the actors who portray them should have microphones to ensure they can be heard by the entire audience.

Traditionally, stage directions appear in italic type style, but research shows that italicized type is hard to read (also, computer printouts do not show it very clearly), so in this play the stage directions appear in regular type within parentheses. For contrast and easy readability, the spoken text appears in bold. Speakers' names appear in small capitals, underlined, flush left.

#### SCENE 1: PARADING AND MR. LINCOLN'S ARRIVAL

(The re-enactment takes place in the present-day Lincoln and Logan County Courthouse Historic Square District. Parading around the courthouse square and other streets near the train depot occurs before MR. LINCOLN arrives. Parade participants in period costumes include various individuals in wagons and carriages and on foot, a BRASS BAND, REPUBLICAN DELEGATIONS from the town of Lincoln and other Logan County communities, a separate REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR GROUP for vocal effects in Scenes 2 and 3, and a DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR GROUP for vocal effects in Scenes 2 and 3. The BRASS BAND, including a bass drum, plays such period tunes as "Yankee Doodle," "Hail Columbia, Happy Land," and "Columbia, Gem of the Ocean.")

(Members of the delegations and other political groups carry banners with various slogans: "Lincoln and Clay--one in principle: firm friends and true Republicans," "Lincoln and Trumbull--the champions of Freedom," "Hon. Abram Lincoln--the Pride of Illinois," "Hon. Abram Lincoln--the choice of the Germans." Thirty-two young ladies dressed in white, representing the 32 states in 1858, ride in horse-drawn carriages. Other citizens in period costume march or ride on horseback or in wagons and carriages.)

(As the time for MR. LINCOLN's arrival approaches, many of the parade participants converge at the present-day Lincoln Amtrak depot, located at the intersection of Broadway and Chicago Streets.)

(The BRASS BAND entertains while the crowd waits. MR. LINCOLN, arriving by train or emerging from the depot at the appointed time, is met with a cannon blast and the BRASS BAND playing. MR. LINCOLN is also met by a GREETING COMMITTEE of local dignitaries.)

(The BRASS BAND leads the way as MR. LINCOLN and the GREETING COMMITTEE begin their way east on Broadway Street. MR. LINCOLN rides in a horse-drawn wagon so the crowd has a better view of him than if he were on foot. The wagon is driven by A BLACK MALE. At times during the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Lincoln did ride in a wagon in the parades that preceded the speeches.)

#### SCENE 2: WELCOME AND S.C. PARKS'S INTRODUCTION OF MR. LINCOLN

(A stage platform with speaker's stand has been constructed in front of the steps on the west side of the Logan County Courthouse. This platform has plenty of room for the members of the GREETING COMMITTEE to be seated on either side of the podium in full view of the audience. Plenty of room has been roped off in front of the platform so that the DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR, WHIG SPECTATOR, and REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR can step forth from the front of the crowd to make their comments or ask their questions of the speakers. Room has also been made on one side or the other of the platform near the area of the crowd for the SCHOOL CHOIR. The BRASS BAND occupies the corresponding other side of the platform. Room front and center of the spectator area has been reserved for the REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC GROUPS, whose applause-cheering, hissing-booming throughout the play are important to the effectiveness of its drama and entertainment.)

A PRESENT-DAY NARRATOR (at the podium; this speaker may wish to write his or her own first paragraph, so the following is only a suggestion.)

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I welcome you to this re-enactment of Abraham Lincoln's rally in downtown Lincoln, Illinois, and speech he delivered at this very location on October 16, 1858, the day after the last Lincoln-Douglas debate in Alton. This re-enactment pays tribute to the Great Man who gave his name to this town before he gained national fame. Today, we also pay tribute to the great American right of free speech that enabled Mr. Lincoln to succeed. So, let us begin with a song of celebration. We will now hear \_\_\_\_\_ sing "The Star-Spangled Banner."** (Sung by a choir or soloist. THE PRESENT-DAY NARRATOR returns to his or her seat upon announcing the song. After the song, the NARRATOR returns to the podium.)

#### PRESENT-DAY NARRATOR

**Soon, Samuel C. Parks will introduce Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Parks was Mr. Lincoln's local law partner and one of the citizens who greeted him at the train depot. Mr. Parks, please stand (he briefly stands). Let me also identify the other citizens who might have greeted Mr. Lincoln, and I ask them to stand briefly when I call their names. First, Mr. (and Mrs.?) Robert Latham. He was of the three original owners of the real estate where this town was founded. Mr. Latham and his partners hired Abraham Lincoln to draw up the town's legal papers. Next is Mr. John Dean Gillett, another one of the town's original proprietors and**

one of the first leading real estate developers. He has with him his oldest daughter, Miss Emma Susan. The other members of the Greeting Committee are Mr. Walker, the Republican candidate for the Illinois legislature and loyal supporter of Mr. Lincoln, and Mr. Bowman, president of the town board.

Before we hear from Mr. Parks, let me give you just a little more background about Mr. Lincoln's role in the founding of his first namesake town in 1853. Our founding fathers chose Abraham Lincoln to draw up the town's legal papers because he was well known throughout central Illinois for his good legal work on the Eighth Judicial Circuit. When Mr. Lincoln agreed to be the town's first attorney, Mr. Latham and his partners asked him if they could name the town after him. According to local legend, Abe joked that nothing named Lincoln ever amounted to anything. Also, Abe was here in late August that year on the day when town lots were first sold. At that time, also according to legend, he christened the town in his name with the juice of a watermelon from a pile of them that refreshed the crowd. For decades, we have celebrated and re-enacted that famous watermelon christening (applause from both REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC GROUPS). In 1853, Mr. Lincoln had mostly retired from politics, but just a year later he vigorously returned to politics, and we will soon learn the reason.

At this time, Mr. Parks, please come forward to introduce our distinguished speaker (light applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP).

SAMUEL C. PARKS (rises, walks to the podium)

My Fellow Citizens of Lincoln and Logan County,

I am deeply honored to make this introduction. Just about three weeks ago, the Honorable Judge David Davis invited our popular Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate, Abraham Lincoln, to speak to us here. Mr. Lincoln's opponent, Judge Douglas--the so-called Little Giant--, had already spoken here twice. Some of you recall Douglas was here on September 4<sup>th</sup> and spoke under a circus tent. After that, Judge Davis and I felt that Mr. Lincoln needed to argue his positions here, too, before the November election. Just yesterday Mr. Lincoln finished the 7<sup>th</sup> and final debate with Judge Douglas in Alton. Today we are fortunate. Despite his tiring schedule, Mr. Lincoln has traveled from Springfield to come before us to tell why we should elect him to the U.S. Senate (applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP and bass drum beating).

Let me tell you why I support Mr. Lincoln for the Senate. I have known him for 18 years, so I truly understand his good character. We first met in Springfield in 1840 when I was studying law in the office of Mr. Lincoln's first partner, Mr. John T. Stuart. In 1846, I moved to Logan County and lived and practiced law in all of its county seats: Postville, Mt. Pulaski, and now Lincoln. I have observed Mr. Lincoln in the courts at all of these places. In 1854 the county seat was moved to this town from Mt. Pulaski (loud boos from the MT. PULASKI REPUBLICAN DELEGATION). All right, you Mt. Pulaski Hilltoppers, we hear you. But anyway--since then, Mr. Lincoln has often visited my office in the very building just behind you there (points to the building directly across the street, behind the audience), where he and I

have worked together on many legal cases. Mr. Lincoln has also established himself as a public servant. Between 1834 and 1842, he served four terms in the Illinois state legislature, where he helped to write the law that created Logan County. He served as a U.S. congressman from 1847 to 1849. He then mostly withdrew from politics. Now for some more recent facts. . . (interrupted by the DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR).

DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR (agitated, steps forward from near the front of the crowd and speaks so that all can hear. Note: Throughout this play, the interruptions of the DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR, REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR, and the WHIG SPECTATOR should be staged to afford them as much visibility and audibility as possible. For example, these figures should have an area in front of the platform to move into as they speak to help the audience see them, and they should have microphones.)

**Wait a minute, wait a minute, Parks! We don't want no long-winded introduction. Some of us came to hear Abe, not you!** (applause and loud laughter from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP)

PARKS

Well, yes, but some folks here want to have a little more background to help them understand what Mr. Lincoln might talk to us about, so let me continue for just a couple more minutes. Mr. Lincoln had almost quit his career in politics until Senator Douglas and his Democratic party pushed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill through Congress in 1854 and got it signed by the President. That law re-opened the possibility of slavery being extended into new territories. Before 1854, the extension of slavery had been limited by the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Most citizens, including Abraham Lincoln, had thought that slavery had been contained, and it would eventually just die out. The Kansas-Nebraska Bill shocked people in the North. Mr. Lincoln's partner, William Herndon, told me Lincoln was "astounded," "thunderstruck," and "stunned." (Each of these words in this series is spoken emphatically and followed by a brief pause.) Mr. Lincoln knew he then had to get back into politics to fight the spread of slavery, and that's why he has been debating the Little Giant and has come here today to speak to us (applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP).

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (calling out loudly)

**Yes, that's right. Good! Good!** (bass drum beating and applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP)

PARKS

**Lincoln knew he would have to stop Douglas and the Democratic administration of President Buchanan. I see some of you in the audience are from the Democratic Party.** (Cheers from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP and boos-hissing from the REPUBLICAN GROUP. The DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR again steps forward out of the front of the crowd toward the podium.)

DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR (arm raised to get attention; speaks very loudly)

**Wa-a-ll now, that's enough, Parks, and I don't want to have to hear a long speech from Abe, either** (pause). **And Abe better not try to make abolitionists of us. Some of us Douglas men--and women, too-- just came to hear Abe tell some of the stories and jokes he is well known for, so let's get on with it** (laughter and light applause from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP).

PARKS (slightly raising his voice, his outstretched arm scans across the crowd)

**All right, all right. I now urge you multitudes gathered here today--Republicans, "old line" Whigs, and Democrats . . . , townspeople and country people . . . , men, women, and children--to listen carefully to our speaker--he always tells the truth. And now I give you one of the founders of Logan County and namesake of this very town: Abraham Lincoln** (mixed reaction: applause-cheers from the REPUBLICAN GROUP, bass drum beating, and booing-hissing from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP).

### SCENE 3: MR. LINCOLN'S SPEECH

(MR. LINCOLN slowly, proudly rises to his full height. He stands, pausing momentarily. He then removes his stovepipe hat and takes his speech from it. EMMA SUSAN GILLETT rises, walks to MR. LINCOLN, extends her hand, and takes his hat to hold during the speech. She returns to her seat. MR. LINCOLN walks to the podium and places his speech before him. He partially raises one arm and lowers it, waiting for the crowd to become quiet.)

MR. LINCOLN

**Thank you, my good friend, Mr. Parks, and thanks to the rest of the Greeting Committee for your hospitality** (as he speaks, he turns briefly to MR. PARKS and nods to him and the others seated on the platform). **Ladies and gentlemen and younger citizens of the great state of Illinois, I see many other familiar faces in the audience, including some of my long-time friends in the Whig party.**

**I have had many pleasant dealings in this town and other towns here in Logan County. You are kind to gather today to hear my remarks. When Mr. Latham and his partners asked me if they could name this town after me, I warned them that nothing named Lincoln ever amounted to anything, but I told them I had no objection if they were determined to do so. Now, every time I visit here I am pleased to see more and more new people and new businesses. I am happy to see this town is growing.**

**Let me give you an example of a new business. Last March I came into possession of a lot just over on the south side of the square** (raises his left arm and points to the location--toward the present-day Arcade Building). **I acquired this lot as payment for a loan debt owed to me. At the time I took possession of this property, I noticed a shed on my lot that I had not seen there before, and the shed had some horses in it. So I guess I was in a business that I didn't even know about** (laughter from the REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC GROUPS). **When I went into the courthouse to pay taxes on this lot, I met deputy sheriff Lewis Rosenthal, who**

is also the county tax collector, and I asked him whose shed and horses were on my lot. Mr. Rosenthal said a man here in town who is a good friend of mine was going into the horse trading business and needed a temporary place to stable some extra horses. I said, "Well, then I reckon that friend is getting all the benefit from the lot, and I am getting none, so that friend can pay the taxes." I asked Rosenthal who that friend is, and he confessed he is the one. I paused and smiled at him as I said, "Oh, all right, I'll be an equally good friend to you and pay the taxes after all" (applause and laughter from the REPUBLICAN GROUP).

The other new businesses I now see prove that this town is amounting (emphasized) to something. I am now involved in a political competition with Judge Douglas that I hope will prove that I, too, will amount to something (applause, laughter from the REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC GROUPS, and bass drum beating).

Just yesterday Judge Douglas and I finished our joint discussions with our debate in Alton. We had also appeared in debates at 6 other towns throughout the state, and each of us has spoken individually in dozens of other Illinois towns. You also know that just a little more than a month ago Judge Douglas had his own rally in this town. He took advantage of a circus being here to attract a crowd. I sat in the audience but did not speak because it was his special day. Now, my friends and I have our special day in this town--but there is no circus here to give me an artificial audience with inflated numbers, so I thank you again for coming to hear me (applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP). A day or two after Douglas spoke under the circus tent here, the *Chicago Press & Tribune* published a humorous account of it. That account suggested that when Douglas was here, he was (emphasized) part of the circus, but the newspaper was not sure exactly what kind of performer he was. Let me read to you just a brief quotation from that article: "where Judge Douglas is classed we are not informed. Whether he is among the riders, acrobats, gymnasts, or one of the clowns the circus bill leaves us in a blissful ignorance." Well, my friends do you think Judge Douglas could be any of these kinds of circus performers?

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (loudly)

Yes, yes! When Douglas spoke here, some of us Republicans went to see him. He used his whole body for theatrical effects. He strutted and paced back and forth. He waved his arms wildly. He shook his head so that his hair flew all around, and he contorted and twisted his face. In all of these things, Douglas acted just like a clown! (loud laughter from the REPUBLICAN GROUP, applause, and drum beating)

MR. LINCOLN (raises his arm slightly as a signal for the crowd to get quiet)

Well, my friends perhaps you have been amused (pauses), but now we must be serious. Many of you have read reports in the newspapers of the debates that the Judge and I have just concluded, so you know that the main subject has been the slavery problem. Today let me tell you how Judge Douglas and I disagree on the question of slavery.

I will start with Judge Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty because he keeps saying it is the one and only solution to the slavery problem. The Judge's idea of popular

sovereignty means that the people who settle in a new territory should decide whether it should become a free state or a slave state. He brags that he invented this doctrine, and that it is right because it is self-government. I say the Judge did not invent self-government--the American people practiced it at the founding of this nation--, and popular sovereignty in the new territories where slaves would be taken is not self-government at all. Let me quote briefly from a speech I gave in Peoria just four years ago:

The doctrine of self-government is right—absolutely and eternally right—but it has no just application as here attempted in Kansas. If the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. It is tyranny. If the Negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that "all men are created equal"; and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another.

I say so much for the Judge's gur-r-r-reat pur-r-r-rinciple (he drags out the pronunciation for sarcasm) of popular sovereignty.

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (near the front of the crowd, speaking very loudly)

**Good! Good! Hit him hard! Hit him, hit him again!** (applause and laughter from the REPUBLICAN GROUP, bass drum beating. Soon, MR. LINCOLN raises his arm slightly as a signal for the crowd to get quiet.)

DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR (steps forth from the front of the crowd, speaking loudly)

**All right, all right, Abe--that sounds like a lecture. Now give us a break. During your debates with the Little Giant, what was the funniest story or joke you told?** (laughter from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP)

MR. LINCOLN

Sir, please--you are interrupting the points I want to make. These debates were generally serious because slavery is a most important subject to this country's future, and so during the debates I did not tell as many stories and jokes as I sometimes do. The slavery question is of great importance to this nation as I had stated in my House Divided Speech last June. What happens to the slavery question will determine whether this nation will become all free or all slave. So, let me continue. I reckon many in this audience are here to get more information to help them decide whether they will vote for the Judge or for me.

WHIG SPECTATOR (steps from in front of the crowd, speaking loudly)

Yes, Abe, I have always been a Whig, but our party is fading away now that our old enemy, Andy Jackson--Old Hickory--, is gone. So I need more information before I can



decide how to vote. Can you tell me the difference between you Republicans and the Democrats?

MR. LINCOLN

Yes, you are correct to ask that, and I was asked this very same question about a month ago when I spoke at Edwardsville, and basically I gave the following reply: the difference between the Republican and the Democratic parties on the leading issue of this contest, as I understand it, is, that we Republicans consider slavery a moral, social and political wrong, while the Democrats do not consider it either a moral, social or political wrong. Judge Douglas more than once has said he does not care whether slavery is voted down or voted up. Every measure of the Democratic party of late years, bearing directly or indirectly on the slavery question, has corresponded with this notion of utter indifference whether slavery or freedom shall outrun in the race of empire across the Pacific--every measure, I say, up to the Dred Scott decision, where the idea is boldly suggested that slavery is better than freedom. The Republican party, on the contrary, holds that this government was instituted to secure the blessings of freedom, and that slavery is an unqualified evil to the Negro, to the white man, to the soil, and to the State. Regarding slavery as an evil, the Republicans, however, will not molest it in the States where it exists, but they will use every constitutional method to prevent the evil from becoming larger. They will place slavery in a course of ultimate peaceable extinction, in God's own good time.

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (loudly)

**Yes! Yes! Hurrah for Lincoln! That's the true doctrine!** (applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP and bass drum beating. Mr. Lincoln raises his arm slightly to signal the need for quiet.)

MR. LINCOLN (speaks passionately, lifts his arms and points with his right index finger to emphasize his main ideas)

Let me emphasize that I believe in the gradual, ultimate extinction of slavery--it may take a hundred years--, so Judge Douglas is completely wrong when he accuses me of being an abolitionist. I have never been an abolitionist. He also falsely accuses me of trying to get rid of slavery by starting a civil war. I don't want to call him a liar, but, yet, if I come square up to the truth, I do not know what else it is. The Judge is also wrong when he accuses me of being in favor of total equality between whites and blacks. I have repeatedly said that just because I do not want a Negro for a slave does not mean I want one for a wife. And just three days ago in Quincy, I explained there is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence--the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas, the Negro is not my equal in many respects . . . , but in the right to eat the bread which he earns with his own hands, he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, the equal of every living man.

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (loudly calls out)

**Yes, yes, you are right, Abe! We are with you!** (applause from the REPUBLICAN GROUP and bass drum beating. Mr. Lincoln raises his arm to quiet the crowd.)

DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR

**Abe, you keep trying to lecture us, and I am getting bored. I hope you won't be dragging this out for hours. I have heard that you can go on and on for more than two hours. Can you try again to amuse us for just for a minute? During the debates, didn't you say anything funny?** (laughter from the DEMOCRATIC GROUP).

MR. LINCOLN

Well, today I am somewhat tired after finishing the debates yesterday, so I might not speak as long as I usually do. I don't think I said much that was funny during the debates (pauses). One amusing thing, however, that does come to mind is that as soon as the first debate at Ottawa began, the Judge tried to tell a little joke about me. He was reviewing his early careers and mine. He mentioned he had been a school teacher in Winchester, and he claimed I had been a saloon keeper in New Salem. He got a few laughs when he said that. When it was my turn to speak, I got a few laughs of my own when I corrected him. I pointed out that the Judge was woefully at fault about my being a saloon keeper. I don't know that it would be a great sin if I had been a saloon keeper, but the Judge was mistaken. This Lincoln never kept a saloon in his life--(briefly pausing)--, but it is true that I did work the latter part of one winter at a little still house up at the head of a little valley (applause and laughter from the REPUBLICAN GROUP).

After we said these things at Ottawa, I have heard another version of this story from my friends. This version has puffed up the incident and has no basis in fact, but I will tell it anyway for your consideration. I guess you might call the puffed up version a kind of rural legend (loud groans from both the REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC GROUPS). In the new version, Douglas supposedly said that I had been a very good bartender. And when it came my turn to speak, I supposedly replied that while I had once stood on one side of the bar and sold whiskey to Mr. Douglas, I since then had left my side of the bar--, but Mr. Douglas still sticks to his side as much as ever (applause, bass drum beating, and great laughter from the REPUBLICAN GROUP. Mr. Lincoln raises his arm as a signal for quiet.)

Now, my friends, I must return to my main message for just a short time, and that means we must consider the Dred Scott decision. You will remember that in this decision the Supreme Court ruled that Dred Scott--as a Negro--was neither a free man nor a citizen even though he had lived in the free states of Illinois and Wisconsin. Unfortunately, this decision meant that his owners could claim him as property and take him into new territories. Thus, I asked Judge Douglas if this decision had not canceled his gur-r-r-reat pur-r-r-r-inciple of popular sovereignty. He said it did not. He said the people of a new territory could still reject slavery. They could reject it by refusing to enact the local laws that are necessary to enforce and sustain slavery. This theory of the Judge's on how slavery

can be prevented in the new territories by local, "unfriendly legislation" toward slavery has caused him problems with Southerners and even his own Democratic President Buchanan. The Judge has also offended many in his own party because he did not support the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution in the new territory of Kansas. The Judge said that constitution was not formed by a true and accurate majority of Kansas voters. As a result of the Judge's problems with his own party, some Republicans in the East have begun to think the Judge should join our Republican party. (Lincoln speaks the next sentences with great emphasis.) **But Douglas is not one of us. He does not care whether slavery is voted down or voted up. He does not think slavery is a moral wrong--, but all true Republicans do condemn slavery as a great evil.**

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR (loudly)

**Good! Yes! That is the right doctrine! Hurrah for Lincoln!** (applause, cheers from the REPUBLICAN GROUP, bass drum beating)

DEMOCRATIC SPECTATOR (comes forward toward the platform, waiting for the audience to become quiet)

**Abe, it sounds like you really don't like the Little Giant at all. I even heard tell of one story that said you and the Judge were going to settle your differences with a fist fight. Is that true?**

MR. LINCOLN

**No, no fist fight. The Judge and I are strong competitors, but I deny we have ever wanted to settle our differences with a fist fight. However, I think I can explain the basis of the fight rumor. Last August at Havana, just a few miles west of here, the Judge spoke on one day, and I followed him on the next. Just before I spoke, I friend told me the Judge had become a little excited and said something about fighting, as though referring to a pugilistic encounter between him and myself. I was informed, further, that somebody in his audience, rather more excited, or nervous, than himself, took off his coat, and offered to take the job off Judge Douglas's hands, and fight me himself. Certainly, I did not and do not want to fight Judge Douglas or his second. In the first place, a fight would prove nothing which is an issue in this political contest. It might establish that Judge Douglas is a more muscular man than myself, or it might demonstrate that I am a more muscular man than Judge Douglas. But this question is not referred to in the Democratic or Republican platforms in this Senate race (laughter from both the DEMOCRATIC and REPUBLICAN GROUPS).**

**Another reason for not having a personal encounter with the Judge is that I don't believe he wants it himself. He would no more think of fighting me than of fighting his pleasant wife. If he used the word fighting, he was not giving vent to ill-feeling of his own, but merely trying to excite--well, enthusiasm against me in the audience. And you know it is his manner sometimes to get overly-dramatic for that purpose (from the REPUBLICAN GROUP: much applause, laughter, and cheering; bass drum beating).**

Now I am not going to detain you much longer. We have in our nation this element of domestic slavery. It is the opinion of all the great men who have expressed opinions upon it that it is a dangerous element. The Missouri Compromise had set forth limits on its future spreading, but Mr. Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the Dred Scott decision have removed those limits, so now we are faced with more national agitation. Why keep up a controversy in regard to it? If we do not restore the limits on slavery, we will not see its ultimate extinction. We will see it spreading. We can expect the next Dred Scott decision will declare that just as slavery cannot be kept out of the new territories, it cannot be kept out of those states that are now free. As I said in my House Divided Speech last June in Springfield--and this is a crucial point--, "we shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free; and we shall awake to the reality, instead, that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave state." Is that what you people of central Illinois want?

REPUBLICAN and DEMOCRATIC SPECTATORS (loudly answering together)

**No, no, we do not want slavery in Illinois! Never! Never!**

MR. LINCOLN (in this conclusion--called the peroration in classical rhetoric--, LINCOLN becomes quite excited and animated, as expressed through voice and gesture, emphasizing his main points by raising his arms and by pointing the index finger of his right hand.)

Let me say I think I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist amongst them, they would not introduce it. Yet, I cannot but hate slavery because of its monstrous injustice. I hate it because it deprives the Negro of his natural rights promised in the Declaration of Independence. I hate slavery because it deprives our nation of its just influence in the world--enables the enemies of free institutions to ridicule us as hypocrites--causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty--criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle but self-interest.

My fellow citizens, let me emphasize that we must take action to return slavery to its original status as established by the founding fathers. Your votes for the Republicans running for the state legislature will be votes that will send me to the Senate. There, I will work to restore the Missouri Compromise and to urge the Supreme Court to overturn its Dred Scott decision so we can once again put slavery on the course of ultimate extinction as the founding fathers intended. And now, I will close by asking you a simple question--will you help me in this necessary and noble cause?

REPUBLICAN SPECTATOR

**Yes, yes, we will do it! Yes, we are with you! Hurrah, hurrah for Honest Abe!** (The REPUBLICAN GROUP ad libs with various, loud expressions of support. The GREETING COMMITTEE rises and applauds. In the REPUBLICAN GROUP, the DEMOCRATIC GROUP, and the

entire audience, there is loud, growing applause and cheering. The bass drum beats fiercely, and the band begins to play. MR. LINCOLN walks to the side of the podium, taking several bows. He returns to stand in front of his chair, and EMMA SUSAN GILLET walks over to hand him his hat. In gratitude, he kisses her cheek. He raises his hat above his head before he puts it on. As he leaves the platform, a group of enthusiastic supporters hoist ABRAHAM LINCOLN onto their shoulders, and they leave the courthouse lawn, following the blaring brass band.)

Notes: on the estimated time of the play: from MR. LINCOLN's dramatic arrival till his departure on the shoulders of his jubilant fans, with good planning and good luck--no technical problems--, the play should take only about an hour.

The election results brought Lincoln quite close to the Senate seat he had so long coveted and work for. As Allen C. Guelzo notes, "some of the Whig Belt districts fell to Douglas by maddeningly narrow margins" (*Lincoln and Douglas*, pp. 284--286), and an obsolete apportionment gave Democrats an unfair advantage. In Logan County, the Republicans won "by 141, but lost the representative district in losing Macon County by 216 votes. . ." (King, *Lincoln's Manager*, p. 342). Mr. Lincoln's 1858 stump speech at Lincoln surely must have given him a measure of satisfaction and proof of his growing rhetorical powers that would in the next two years advance him to the Presidency.

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