



ABRAHAM
LINCOLN

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

UPON DEBATING WITH DOUGLAS AT CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

SEPTEMBER 18, 1858

“I will say, then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races – that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people, and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality, and in as much as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I, as much as any other man, am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race. ”

Nicolay and Hay, Complete Works of Lincoln, Vol. 4, 89.

*Repeating verbatim the foregoing statement of September 18, 1859, in a speech at Columbus, Ohio, September 16, 1859. (Nicolay and Hay, Complete Works of Lincoln, vol. 5, 143-144.)

Image: War Department. Office of the Chief Signal Officer. (8/1/1866 - 9/18/1947). Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, Ill, ca. 1860 - ca. 1865. Photograph. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/528297>



SPEECH AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

JUNE 26, 1857

“A separation of the races is the only perfect preventive of amalgamation; but as an immediate separation is impossible the next best thing is to keep them apart where they are not already together. . . .

“Such separation, if ever effected at all, must be effected by colonization; . . .”

EMANCIPATION IRREVOCABLE, ANNUAL MESSAGE TO CONGRESS,

DECEMBER 6, 1864

“If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an executive duty to re-enslave such persons [blacks], another, and not I, must be their instrument to² perform it. ”

FIRST ANNUAL MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

DECEMBER 3, 1861

“. . . that the emancipated slaves (including free blacks who consented to go) should be colonized. ”
(See p. 54, vol. VI, of A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents.)



1. Speech at Springfield, Illinois, June 26, 1857, Nicolay and Hay, Complete Works of Lincoln, vol. 2.
2. Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1864, Nicolay and Hay, Complete Works of Lincoln, vol. 10, 310.

Image: American Anti-Slavery Society, and Anti-Slavery Office. Am I not a man and a brother?. , 1837. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661312/>.