

Spirit of Jefferson

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

The continued disorganization of the Union, to which the President has so often called the attention of Congress, is yet a subject of profound and patriotic concern. We may, however, find some relief from that anxiety in the reflection that the painful political situation, although before untried by ourselves, is not new in the experience of nations.

RECONSTRUCTION.

When a civil war has been brought to a close, it is manifestly the first interest and duty of the State to repair the injuries which the war has inflicted and to secure the benefit of the lessons it teaches as fully and as speedily as possible. This duty was upon the termination of the rebellion promptly accepted, not only by the Executive Department, but by the seceding States themselves.

Or the contrary, candor compels me to declare that at this time there is no Union as our fathers understood the term, and as they meant it to be understood by us. The Union which they established can exist only where all the States are represented in both Houses of Congress.

It is therefore a source of profound regret to me that the obligations imposed upon the President by the Constitution, to give to Congress from time to time information of the state of the Union, I am unable to communicate any definitive adjustment satisfactory to the American people of the questions which, since the close of the rebellion, have agitated the public mind.

Nothing but implicit obedience to its requirements in all parts of the country will accomplish these great ends. Without that obedience, we can look forward only to continual outrages upon individual rights, incessant breaches of the public peace, national weakness, financial dishonor, the total loss of our property, the general corruption of morals, and the final extinction of popular freedom.

The hope that we may all finally consent in a mode of settlement consistent at once with our true interests and with our own sacred duties to the Constitution, is too natural and too just to be easily relinquished. It is clear to my apprehension that the States lately in rebellion are still members of the National Union.

The production of precious metals in the United States from 1849 to 1857, inclusive, amounted to \$570,000,000; from 1858 to 1860, inclusive, to \$187,500,000; and from 1861 to 1867, inclusive, to \$457,500,000, making the grand aggregate of product since 1849 \$1,174,000,000.

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of its lawless principle; nor could Congress, with or without the consent of the Executive, do anything, which would have the effect, directly or indirectly, of separating States from each other.

partial jury. That the privilege of habeas corpus shall not be denied in time of peace, and that no bill of attainder shall be passed even against a single individual. Yet the system of measures established by these acts of Congress does totally subvert and destroy the form as well as the substance of republican government.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Executive, (my predecessor as well as myself), and the heads of all the departments, have uniformly acted upon the principle that the Union is not only undissolved, but indissoluble.

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been left to their own devices they have shown a constant tendency to relapse into barbarism. In the Southern States, however, Congress has undertaken to confer upon them the privilege of the ballot.

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just complaint, and may finally reduce the Treasury of the nation to a condition of bankruptcy. We must not delude ourselves, it will require a strong standing army and probably more than two hundred millions of dollars per annum to maintain the supremacy of negro governments after they are established.

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the rescue of their own constitutions. It gives me pleasure to add that the appeal to our common constitutions was not taken in vain, and that my confidence in their wisdom and virtue seems not to have been misplaced.

It is well and publicly known that enormous frauds have been perpetrated on the Treasury and that colossal fortunes have been made at the public expense. This species of corruption has increased, and is increasing, and if not diminished, will soon bring us into total ruin and disgrace.

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ed, while they gave the Senate a right to reject all appointments which, in its opinion, were not fit to be made. A little reflection on this subject will probably satisfy all who have the good of the country at heart that our best course is to take the Constitution for our guide, walk in the path marked out by the founders of the Republic, and obey the rules made sacred by the observance of our great predecessors.

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THE FINANCES AND THE CURRENCY. The present condition of our finances and circulating medium is one to which your early consideration is invited. The proportion which the currency of any country should bear to the whole value of the annual produce circulated by its means is a question upon which political economists have not agreed.

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