

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE FORTIETH CONGRESS.

Follow-Officers 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.

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 war has inflicted, and to secure the benefit of the lessons it teaches as fully and as speedily as possible.

It is therefore a source of profound regret that, in complying with the obligation 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 definite adjustment, satisfactory to the American people, of the questions which, since the close of the rebellion, have agitated the public mind.

The Union and the Constitution are inseparable. As long as one is obeyed by all parties, the other will be preserved, and if one is destroyed both must perish together.

Nothing but implicit obedience to its requirements in all parts of the national jurisdiction, strictly confined to the ends of the original compact, would be the greatest temporal blessing which could befall this nation.

On this momentous question, I have had the misfortune to differ from Congress, and have expressed my convictions without reserve, though with becoming deference to the opinion of the Legislative Department.

It is clear to my apprehension that the States lately in rebellion are members of the National Union. When did they cease to be so?

This is so plain that it has been acknowledged by all branches of the Federal Government. The Executive (my predecessor as well as myself) and the Judges of the Supreme Court have uniformly acted upon the principle that the Union is not only undivided, but indissoluble.

If the Southern States are component parts of the Union, it is for all the other States to be bound to it, as it is for all the other States to be bound to it, as it is for all the other States to be bound to it.

mons vote of both Houses, that the war should be conducted solely for the purpose of preserving the Union, and maintaining the supremacy of the Federal Constitution and laws, without impairing the dignity, equality, and rights of the States or of individuals.

Being sincerely convinced that this view is correct, I would be unfaithful to my duty if I did not recommend the repeal of the acts of Congress which place ten of the Southern States under the domination of military officers.

These are powers not granted to the Federal Government, or to any of its departments. Not being granted, we violate our trust by assuming them.

The acts of Congress in question are not only objectionable for their assumption of ungranted power, but also for their direct violation of the Constitution.

These wrongs, being expressly forbidden, cannot be remedied by any portion of our power, no matter how they come within our jurisdiction, and no matter whether they live in States, Territories, or Districts.

I have no desire to save from the proper and just consequences of their great crime those who engaged in it, or to shield against the Government; but as a mode of punishment, the consideration of the most unreasonable that could be devised for those people are perfectly innocent; many kept their fidelity to the Union unimpaired to the last; many were incapable of any legal offense; a large proportion of the persons able to bear arms were forced into rebellion against their own consent, the degree of guilt as various as the shades of their character and temper.

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would constitute a grave question whether we ought to do so, or whether common humanity would not require us to save them from themselves.

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impulse of passion and interest. If we repudiate the Constitution, we will not be expected to care much for mere pecuniary obligations.

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extremely difficult to say where that responsibility should be thrown, if it be not left where it has been placed by the Constitution.

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