**LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATES: A House Divided against itself**

*“And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.”* Mark 3:25-26 KJV

*“A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved…It will become all one thing or all the other”. Abraham Lincoln Springfield, IL June 16, 1858*

**PRELUDE**

* Stephen Douglas (1813-1861) first elected to Senate 1846, 1858 would be 3rd term, called “the little giant” was 5’4”, played key role in the Compromise of 1850 as chairman of committee on US territories, it allowed the territories of Utah and New Mexico to decide for or against slavery but allowed the admission of CA as a free state, reduced the size of Texas and ended the slave trade in the District of Columbia, South got a stronger Fugitive Slave Law
* Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) elected to congress in 1846, tall 6’4”, opposes Mexican War, and supports the Wilmot Proviso which wanted to ban slavery in new territories, only serves 1 term
* Kansas Nebraska Act 1854-Douglas plays key role, doctrine of popular sovereignty.
* 1856 Presidential Campaign Republican John C Freemont (1813-1890) vs Democrat James Buchanan and Know Nothing Millard Fillmore-Lincoln campaigns for Freemont.
* Buchanan wins Lincoln decides to run against Douglas for Il Senate
* Lincoln “Fragment on Stephen Douglas” is revealing and ironic on both men.
* Supreme Court Dred Scott case-Dred Scott vs Sanford (1857), Dred Scott (1799-1858) was a slave in Missouri (Slave) taken by his master into IL and WI (Free)-claimed he was free-Court 7-2 ruled NO ruling written by Chief justice Roger Taney (1777-1864)
* 1858 President Buchanan annual message recommends Kansas be admitted as a slave state per the Lecompton Constitution angering the North and ending his chance of second term, Sen. Douglas opposes causing anger in the South.
* Southerners are trying to get the US to buy Cuba and then make 2 slave states out of it.
* USS Dolphin intercepts slave ship The Echo with 318 Congolese natives, interned in Charleston, would it be better to keep them as slaves then return them to barbarity? Eventually returned

**THE LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATES**

* Lincoln suggested debates on July 24-by July 31 7 debates- were agreed upon, both had spoken in Chicago and Springfield within a day of each other: Ottawa 8/21, Freeport 8/27, Jonesboro 9/15, Charleston 9/18, Galesburg 10/7, Quincy 10/13, Alton 10/15 (in each of the 9 congressional districts)
* Each debate lasted 3 hours, one candidate spoke for 60 minutes, then other responded for 90 minutes, then first gets final 30 minutes-they alternated who spoke first, held outdoors 2-5 PM
* The debates focused on Slavery, specifically whether it would be allowed in new states formed from Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican War
* Douglas argued the decision should be made by residents of the new states rather than Federal (Popular Sovereignty)
* Lincoln argued against expansion of slavery yet stressed he was not supporting abolition where it already existed (Slave states argued cotton needed new land, SC exports slaves)
* Railroads helped draw large numbers: Ottawa 12000, Galesburg 18000, Freeport 15000, Quincy 12000, Alton 10000
* Lincoln argued the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which created the Midwestern states including IL banned slavery
* Lincoln argued the Dred Scott decision combined with popular sovereignty would nationalize slavery – it will be Douglas Achilles heel – Lincoln will hammer away at it
* When asked about emancipation of slaves, how that would happen, Lincoln believed in colonization in Africa (Liberia in West Africa example), Lincoln comforted by thought it took 100 years for William Wilberforce & Granville Sharp to end slavery in British Empire
* Douglas accused Lincoln of being an ally of Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) in supporting “abolition doctrines”, a sign read NEGRO EQUALITY with a picture of a white man, a black woman and a mulatto child – Lincoln argued you have that now with white slave owners creating children with black slave women – Lincoln said he does not support negro citizenship, did not support racial equality
* Attacked by Douglas, Lincoln said the Declaration of Independence (1776) did not mean all men were equal in all respects – Lincoln said that Douglas and Chief Justice Taney of the Dred Scott decision were opposing Thomas Jefferson’s self-evident truth that all men were created equal by dehumanizing blacks and preparing the public to think of them as property not humans – John C Calhoun (1782-1850) of SC called it a “self-evident lie” – Calhoun will be a political architect of Succession by the South from Union.
* Lincoln used a number of colorful phrases in the debates to attack Douglas, He said Douglas made a horse chestnut into a chestnut horse (part of horse anatomy on leg above knee), He said Douglas evasion was like the sepia cloud from a cuttlefish (ink they release to hide from predators), and Douglas popular sovereignty “as thin as the homeopathic soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had starved to death”

**RESULT**

* With Railroads and Telegraph the debates were news all around the country much as TV changed elections after the Kennedy Nixon debates
* In October former Whig John J Crittenden endorsed Douglas causing biggest block of swing voters to him
* The districts were drawn in Douglas favor (Gerrymandering), Democrats won 40 seats in state house of representatives compared to 35 for Republicans, in State Senate Democrats received 14 to Republicans 11. Until the 17th Constitutional Amendment of 1913 Senators were elected by the state legislatures – In Popular vote Lincoln won 190468 to 166374 but in the electoral vote Douglas won 54 to 46 and was elected
* Lincolns national profile made him a viable candidate for 1860 election for Republicans.
* Lincoln on February 27, 1860 is invited to speak at the Cooper Union building, he is not yet a candidate for President, to the South he said: *“You say you can not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then you say the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear and mutters through his teeth, Stand and Deliver, or I shall kill you and then you will be the murderer”.*
* Lincoln’s famous ending*: ”Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government nor of dungeons to ourselves. LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT MAKES MIGHT, AND IN THAT FAITH, LET US TO THE END, DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT”*
* Election of 1860 Lincoln wins, and 11 states succeed from Union to form Confederacy.
* Douglas would die June 3, 1861, aged 48 in Chicago of Typhoid Fever, the same day the Battle of Philippi in now West Virginia marked the first skirmish of the Civil War.

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