

# An Address to the People of the Free States by the President of the Southern Confederacy<sup>1</sup>

Jefferson Davis  
Richmond, Virginia  
January 5, 1863.

"Citizens of the non-slaveholding States of America, ... Heretofore, the warfare has been conducted by white men -- peers, scions of the same stock; but the programme has been changed, and your rulers despairing of a triumph by the employment of white men, have degraded you and themselves, by inviting the cooperation of the black race.

Thus, while they deprecate the intervention of white men -- the French and the English -- in behalf of the Southern Confederacy, they, these Abolitionists, do not hesitate to invoke the intervention of the African race in favor of the North...

"Now, therefore, as a compensatory measure, I do hereby issue the following Address to the People of the Non-Slaveholding States:

"On and after February 22, 1863, all free negroes within the limits of the Southern Confederacy shall be placed on the slave status, and be deemed to be chattels, they and their issue forever.

"All negroes who shall be taken in any of the States in which slavery does not now exist, in the progress of our arms, shall be adjudged, immediately after such capture, to occupy the slave status, and in all States which shall be vanquished by our arms, all free negroes shall, *ipso facto*, be reduced to the condition of helotism, so that the respective normal conditions of the white and black races may be ultimately placed on a permanent basis, so as to prevent the public peace from being thereafter endangered.

"Abraham Lincoln has seen fit to ignore the Constitution he has

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<sup>1</sup> Broadside, Jefferson Davis Papers, University Library, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA. This is printed in Ervin L. Jordan, *Black Confederates and Afro-Yankees in Civil War Virginia*, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, 1995, Appendix C, pages 319-320.

solemnly sworn to support, it ought not be considered polemically or politically improper in me to vindicate the position, which has been at an early day of this Southern republic, assumed by the Confederacy, namely, that slavery is the cornerstone of a Western Republic.

"In view of these facts, and conscientiously believing that the proper condition of the negro is slavery, or a complete subjection to the white man, -- and entertaining the belief that the day is not distant when the old Union will be restored with slavery nationally declared to be the proper condition of all of African descent, and in view of the future harmony and progress of all the States of America, I have been induced to issue this address, so that there may be no misunderstanding in the future.

JEFFERSON DAVIS"