

Honest Abe

What He Did

He took an oath to protect the Constitution.

He enslaved the men he conscripted into the Army.

Declared Martial Law and suspended the *Writ of Habeas Corpus*

“All persons... **guilty of any disloyal practice...** shall be subject to martial law. Writ of Habeas Corpus is suspended.”

He signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which Applied to Slaves only in the territories over which he had no control. Slaves in the Border States remained Slaves. No Slaves were freed.

He centralized Federal Government control over all the previously Sovereign States – making them de facto Vassal States.

What He Said He Did

He took an oath to save the Government.

He was fighting to free slaves.

“It was decided that we have a case of rebellion and that the public safety does require the qualified suspension of the privilege of the writ [of Habeas Corpus] which was authorized to be made.”

He freed the Slaves.

He restored the Union

What he said:

July 4th Message to Congress (July 4, 1861)

Abraham Lincoln

“And this issue embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional republic, or democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or can not maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in numbers to control administration according to organic law in any case, can always, upon the pretenses made in this case, or on any other pretenses, or arbitrarily without any pretense, break up their government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask, Is there in all republics this inherent and fatal weakness? **Must a government of necessity be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?**”

What he did:

Abe opted to compromise the Liberties of the People, rather than appearing too weak to stop the southern States from choosing their own destinies. More Americans were killed in the ensuing war than have been killed in any other war in history – including World War II. The Federal Government won; the States and the People lost.