



Emancipation Proclamation

The Emancipation Proclamation was an executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1st, 1863, towards the end of the second year of the Civil War. It stated that those held in slavery by the Confederate states "are, and henceforward shall be free."

Although this declaration of freedom was hugely significant, in reality it only freed about 50,000 of the approximately four million slaves living in the United States at that time. The order only applied to southern states that had seceded from the Union. It did not apply to slaves living in border states which were still a part of the Union, nor did it apply to Confederate states that the North had already defeated.

The Emancipation Proclamation had several important effects in addition to paving the way for the abolition of slavery. It changed the focus of a Union victory to ending slavery. This had the consequence of turning European public opinion in favor of a Union victory. The Emancipation Proclamation also made it possible for African American men to serve as soldiers in the Union Army. Because the southern economy depended on slave labor, the defection of freed slaves into the Union Army had a double benefit for the Union. It increased their military power while crippling the south with the loss of agriculture and factory workers as well as the loss of soldiers.

1. What was the Emancipation Proclamation?
2. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do? What did it not do?
3. What were the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation?