

Navy, will give the information in detail deemed necessary, and convenient for your deliberation, and action; while the Executive, and all the departments, will stand ready to supply omissions, or to communicate new facts, considered important for you to know.

It is now recommended that you give the legal means for making this contest a short and a decisive one; that you place at the control of the government, for the work, at least four hundred thousand men, and four hundred millions of dollars. That number of men is about one-tenth of those of proper ages within the regions where, apparently, *all* are willing to engage; and the sum is less than a twenty-third part of the money value owned by the men who seem ready to devote the whole. A debt of six hundred millions of dollars *now*, is a less sum per head, than was the debt of our revolution when we came out of that struggle; and the money value in the country now, bears even a greater proportion to what it was *then*, than does the population. Surely each man has as strong a motive *now*, to *preserve* our liberties, as each had *then*, to *establish* them.

A right result, at this time, will be worth more to the world than ten times the men, and ten times the money. The evidence reaching us from the country, leaves no doubt, that the material for the work is abundant; and that it needs only the hand of legislation to give it legal sanction, and the hand of the Executive to give it practical shape and efficiency. One of the greatest perplexities of the government is to avoid receiving troops faster than it can provide for them. In a word, the people will save their government, if the government itself, will do its part, only indifferently well.

It might seem, at first thought, to be of little difference whether the present movement at the South be called "secession" or "rebellion." The movers, however, well understand the difference. At the beginning, they knew they could never raise their treason to any respectable magnitude by any name which implies *violation* of law. They knew their people possessed as much of moral sense, as much of devotion to law and order, and as much pride in, and reverence for, the history and government of their common country, as any other civilized and patriotic people. They knew they could make no advancement directly in the teeth of these strong and noble sentiments. Accordingly they commenced by an insidious debauching of the public mind. They invented an ingenious sophism, which, if conceded, was followed by perfectly logical steps, through all the incidents, to the complete destruction of the Union. The sophism itself is, that any State of the Union may, *consistently* with the national Constitution, and therefore *lawfully*, and *peacefully*, withdraw from the Union, without the consent of the Union, or of any other State. The little disguise that the supposed right is to be exercised only for just cause, themselves to be the sole judge of its justice, is too thin to merit any notice.

With rebellion thus sugar-coated, they have been drugging the public mind of their section for more than thirty years; and until at length they have brought many good men to a willingness to take up arms against the government the day *after* some assemblage of

Excerpt from The Message of the President to the two houses of Congress at the commencement of the first session of the 37th Congress, July 5, 1861

1. Who was the president in 1861?
2. What event had begun earlier in the year?
3. What two things did Lincoln suggest in order to end the conflict quickly?
4. How did he calculate the number of men needed?
5. What comparison was made to war debt from the Revolutionary war?
6. Translate into your own words as much as possible the entire sentence above, "Surely each man has as strong a motive now, to preserve our liberties, as each had then..."
7. Why do you feel he said a victory would mean more to the world?
8. What does he believe is blocking the right result?
9. Define secession, use a dictionary if necessary.
10. Define rebellion, use a dictionary if necessary.
11. Why were the "movers" careful in their initial steps?
12. How did the southern "movers" get the masses in the south to buy into their movement?
13. How long did Lincoln believe it had taken the rebels to convince southern residents to secede?

## Answers

1. Who was the president in 1861? Abraham Lincoln
2. What event had begun earlier in the year? The Civil War
3. What two things did Lincoln suggest in order to end the conflict quickly? 400,000 men and \$4,000,000
4. How did he calculate the number of men needed? It was one-tenth of all men available by age
5. What comparison was made to war debt from the Revolutionary war? It would be less now than it was during the Revolutionary War per person
6. Translate into your own words as much as possible the entire sentence above, "Surely each man has as strong a motive now, to preserve our liberties, as each had then..." Answers will vary but might include that people will want to save their freedom just like they wanted to create their freedom initially
7. Why do you feel he said a victory would mean more to the world? Answers will vary but might include that freedom was at stake because if the south won the entire nation would become slave-holding and less free
8. What does he believe is blocking the right result? The government has not approved the necessary tools to succeed
9. Define secession, use a dictionary if necessary. The action of withdrawing formally from membership of a federation or body, esp. a political state: "**secession from** the union".
10. Define rebellion, use a dictionary if necessary. open, armed, and usually unsuccessful defiance of or resistance to an established government
11. Why were the "movers" careful in their initial steps? Because southerners were loyal to their country and believed in following the law.
12. How did the southern "movers" get the masses in the south to buy into their movement? By using the wording of the constitution which allows states to secede
13. How long did Lincoln believe it had taken the rebels to convince southern residents to secede? 30 years