

**To William C. Bryant**

Hon. W. C. Bryant Executive Mansion,  
My dear Sir. Washington, June 27. 1864.

Yours of the 25th. has just been handed me by the Secretary of the Navy. The tone of the letter, rather than any direct statement in it, impresses me as a complaint that Mr. Henderson should have been removed from office, and arrested; coupled with the single suggestion that he be restored, if he shall establish his innocence. I know absolutely nothing of the case except as follows---Monday last Mr. Welles came to me with the letter of dismissal already written, saying he thought proper to show it to me before sending it. I asked him the charges, which he stated in a general way. With as much emphasis as I could I said "*Are you entirely certain of his guilt*" He answered that he was, to which I replied "Then send the letter." Whether Mr. Henderson was a supporter of my second nomination I neither knew, or enquired, or even thought of. I shall be very glad indeed if he shall, as you anticipate, establish his innocence; or, to state it more strongly and properly, "if the government shall fail to establish his guilt." I believe however, the man who made the affidavit was of as spotless reputation as Mr. Henderson, until he was arrested on what his friends insist was outrageously insufficient evidence. I know the entire city government of Washington, with many other respectable citizens, appealed to me in his behalf, as a greatly injured gentleman.

While the subject is up may I ask whether the Evening Post has not assailed me for supposed too lenient dealing with persons charged of fraud & crime? and that in cases of which the Post could know but little of the facts? I shall certainly deal as leniently with Mr. Henderson as I have felt it my duty to deal with others, notwithstanding any newspaper assaults. Your Obt. Servt.

A. LINCOLN

Bryant replied on June 30:

"I thank you for the attention you have given to my letter. It confirms my convictions of your equity and love of justice.

"You speak of having been assailed in the Evening Post. I greatly regret that any thing said of your public conduct in that journal should seem to you like an assault, or in any way the indication of hostility. It was not intended to proceed beyond the bounds of respectful criticism, such as the Evening Post, ever since I have had any thing to do with it, has always permitted itself to use tow[ard] every successive administration of the government. Nor have I done you the wrong of supposing that any freedom of remark would make you forget what was due to justice and right. . . ."

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-index?q1=fairness;rgn=div1;c=lincoln;view=text;type=simple;cc=lincoln;subview=detail;sort=occur;idno=lincoln7;node=lincoln7%3A907>

1. What was Lincoln's purpose for writing this letter?
2. Explain why Bryant said, "I thank you for the attention you have given to my letter. It confirms my convictions of your equity and love of justice."
3. How does this letter show that he is fair and just in his actions? Provide evidence from the letter(s) to support your answer.
4. Does this speech show Lincoln as a strong Commander-in-Chief, Great Emancipator, Preserver of Union or all? Explain your answer by providing examples.
5. How does this action support that Lincoln was a leader?