

THE LINCOLN- DOUGLAS DEBATES:

STEPHEN DOUGLAS
JONESBORO, ILLINOIS
SEPTEMBER 15, 1858



I ask you, are you in favor of conferring upon the negro the rights and privileges of citizenship? ("No, no") Do you desire to strike out of our State Constitution that clause which keeps slaves and free blacks out of the State, and allow the free negroes to flow in, ("never") and cover your prairies with black settlements? Do you desire to turn this beautiful State into a free negro colony, ("no, no...no") in order that when Missouri abolishes slavery she can send one hundred thousand emancipated slaves into Illinois, to become citizens and voters, on an equality with yourselves? ("Never," "no") If you desire negro citizenship, ("no, no...no") if you desire to allow them to come into the State and settle with the white man, if you desire them to vote on an equality with yourselves, and to make them eligible to office, to serve on juries, and to adjudge your rights, then support Mr. Lincoln and the Black Republican party, who are in favor of the citizenship of the negro. ("Never, never") For one, I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. ("yes, yes") (Cheers) Yes is true I believe this Government was made on the white basis. ("Good good good") I believe it was made by white men are over the negroes for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men, men of European birth and descent, instead of conferring it upon negroes, Indians, and other inferior races. ("Good Good"), ("and good for you") ("Douglas forever") ("Yes Yes... yes)

Mr. Lincoln, following the example and lead of all the little Abolition orators, who go around and lecture in the basements of schools and churches, reads from the Declaration of Independence, that all men were created equal, and then asks, how can you deprive a negro of that equality which God and the Declaration of Independence awards to him? ... Now, I hold that Illinois had a right to abolish and prohibit slavery as she did, and I hold that Kentucky has the same right to continue and protect slavery that Illinois had to abolish it. I hold that New York had as much right to abolish slavery as Virginia has to continue it, and that each and every State of this Union is a sovereign power, with the right to do as it pleases upon this question of slavery, and upon all its domestic institutions. ...