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| **Source #1: Editorial, *Chicago Times* (November 23, 1863)** |
| … [T]he President’s exhibition … was an insult at least to the memories of a part of the dead, whom he was there professedly to honor,—in its misstatement of the cause for which they died, it was a perversion of history so flagrant that the most extended charity cannot regard it as otherwise than willful… As a refutation… we copy certain clauses in the Federal constitution: “Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included in this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.” “The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person… No amendment to the constitution, made prior to 1808, shall affect the preceding clause.” “No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.” Do these provisions in the constitution dedicate the nation to “the proposition that all men are created equal”? Mr. Lincoln occupies his present position by virtue of this constitution, and is sworn to the maintenance and enforcement of these provisions. It was to uphold this constitution, and the Union created by it, that our officers and soldiers gave their lives at Gettysburg. How dared he, then, standing on their graves, misstate the cause for which they died, and libel the statesmen who founded the government? They were men possessing too much self-respect to declare that negroes were their equals, or were entitled to equal privileges. |

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| **Source #2: Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Worlds that Remade America*** |
| The tragedy of macerated bodies … are transfigured in Lincoln’s rhetoric, where the physical residue of battle is volatilized as the product of an experiment *testing* whether a government can maintain the *proposition* of equality. The stakes of the three days’ butchery are made intellectual, with abstract truths being vindicated. Despite verbal gestures to “that” battle and the men who died “here,” there are no particulars mentioned by Lincoln--no names of men or sites or units, or even of sides (the Southerners are part of the “experiment,” not foes mentioned in anger or rebuke)… His speech hovers far above the carnage. He lifts the battle to a level of abstraction that purges it of grosser matter--even “earth” is mentioned as the thing from which the tested form of government shall not perish… The nightmare realities have been etherialized in the crucible of his language... But that was just the beginning of this complex transformation. Lincoln did for the whole Civil War what he accomplished for the single battlefield. He has prescinded from messy squabbles over constitutionality, sectionalism, property, states. Slavery is not mentioned, any more than Gettysburg is. The discussion is driven back and back, beyond the historical particulars, to great ideals that are made to grapple naked in an airy battle of the mind. Lincoln derives a new, a transcendental, significance from this bloody episode… [H]e not only put the Declaration in a new light as a matter of founding law, but put its central proposition, equality, in a newly favored position as a principle of the Constitution (which, as the *Chicago Times* noticed, never uses the word). What had been a mere theory…--that the nation preceded the states, in time and importance--now became a lived reality of the American tradition. The results of this were seen almost at once. Up to the Civil War, "the United States" was invariably a plural noun: "The United States are a free government." After Gettysburg, it became a singular: "The United States is a free government." This was a result of the whole mode of thinking Lincoln expressed in his acts as well as his words, making *union* not a mystical hope but a constitutional reality… (37, 145). |