

Washington, Feb. 20. 1848-

Dear Sinder:

In law it is good policy to never plead what you need not, lest you oblige yourself to prove what you can not. Reflect on this well before you proceed. The application I mean to make of this rule is, that you should simply go for Gen^l Taylor, because by this, you can take some democrats, and lose no whigs; but if you go also for Mr Polk on the origin and mode of prosecuting the war, you will still take some democrats, but you will lose more whigs, so that in the sum of the operation you will be lower. This is, at least my opinion; and if you will look round, I doubt, if you do not discover such to be the fact amongst your own neighbors. Further than this: By justifying Mr Polk's mode of prosecuting the war, you put yourself in opposition to Gen^l Taylor himself, for we all know he has declared for, and, in fact originated, the defensive line policy.

You know I mean this in kindness, and I wish it to be confidential.

Yours as ever
A. Lincoln

