Private

Executive Mansion,
Washington, March 26, 1863

Hon. Andrew Johnson,
My dear Sir:

I am told you have at least thought of raising a negro military force. In my opinion the country now needs no specific thing so much as some man of your ability, and position, to go to this work. When I speak of your position, I mean that of an eminent citizen of a slave state, and simply a planter. The colored population is the great available and yet unused force for winning the Union. The bare sight of fifty thousand men, one shilow black soldier, on the banks of the Mississippi would end the rebellion at once. And who would say that we can present this sight if we but take hold in earnest? If you have been thinking of it please do not dismiss the thought.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln


Morgan Library.