

“Copy”

Harrisburg Pa. Oct 1st 1862

James Buchanan Ex Pres't U. S.

Dear Sir.

After I left Wheatland yesterday, your pleasant home, where you and I had a very interesting conversation, in relation to the policy of this Government, I was congratulating myself on the prospect of being instrumental as far as possible, in satisfying the American people, of the loyalty, of their once, much respected president.

When I left Wheatland, I went to Lancaster. In conversation with Mr. Hamilton there, who said he was a near neighbor of yours, he gave his views, right to the opposite of your declarations throughout and quoted you as endorsing all his views. I denounced him to his face as a traitor, to his Country and said that any man, that endorsed his sentiments, was a sympathizer with the Southern Rebellion. The further I processed West, the general opinion seems to be, that you are not a loyal man. My conversation with you yesterday and your own declarations to me were such that I am bound to believe you are a loyal man. Now I will state what I understood you to say, to me yesterday – to wit.

2nd That Pres had done all in his power to deep out of the war and now that the war was afforded upon him, it was his bounden duty to prosecute the war to a speedy and honorable peace

3. That there was no such thing as a Compromise with the Rebels and that if you were in the Presidential Chair you would have your right arm severed from your body before you would sign a compromise or acknowledge one inch of their infernal Southern Confederacy.

I told you I was on my way [sic] to Kentucky to my son who was an officer in the 18th. Ky. Vol. who had recently lost his right arm in a battle against the Rebels at Richmond Ky. You asked me if I was a native of ~~Ohio~~ that State. I told you I was a native of Ohio. You then asked what effect the Presidents [sic] proclamation would have in Kentucky and other border states – I did not answer but asked you what effect you hoped that Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee and

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other border States would not make it a pretext for not supporting the Government as it was a military necessity for the President to issue the Proclamation and that it was proper and right. I asked what you believed as to the Constitutionality of it – You said you could not give your opinion without a close examination of the Constitution but you had no doubt that it was all right and that it had become a military necessity for the President of the United States to issue the proclamation at this crisis. Believing the about to be your candid opinions I ask it as a favor to the brave men under arms and the people at home who mourn and weep for their beloved ones who are constantly falling in the defense of our glorious Country, that you will return to me your endorsement of the above statements

I remain

Yours Respectfully

J. Ridenour Jr.

[On the envelope addressed to His Excellency A. G. Curtin, Present with return address of State of Pennsylvania, Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth is written “Copy of letter from J. Ridenour, Jr., to Ex-Prest.[sic] Buchanan, dated Oct 1, 1862.

[Type written copy with original.]

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