

Abraham Lincoln papers

From Zachariah Chandler to Abraham Lincoln¹, August 28, 1860

1 ID: Zachariah Chandler was a Republican member of the U.S. Senate (1857-75) from Michigan who became associated with the Radical faction of the party during the Civil War. As an outspoken member of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, Chandler often criticized Lincoln's war strategy and the generals he placed in command. Though a critic of Lincoln, Chandler supported the president in 1864, when many Radicals favored jettisoning Lincoln in favor of someone more in accord with their point of view. Chandler helped broker a deal that involved the resignation of Montgomery Blair from the cabinet in exchange for John C. Fremont's withdrawal from consideration as a presidential candidate. After the war, Chandler served in President Grant's cabinet as secretary of the interior.

Detroit August 28th 1860

Dear Sir

You may not recollect that we met at Kalamazoo in 1856 at the Mass Convention there. I write at this time to invite yourself & Mrs Lincoln to visit Detroit & become my guests with Mr & Mrs Senator Trumbull on the Second of Oct at the time of our State Fair. C. M. Clay & Family will be with me at that time. I will place at the exclusive disposal of yourself & Friends the Directors Car upon the Michigan Central R R & will promise you during your stay entire exemption from the persecution of office seeking & applications to speak. Michigan is one of the certain states, therefore no political reason can be assigned for the visit. Yet in my estimation & that of some of your most judicious Friends, if made, it may have an important bearing upon results. This I will more fully explain to Senator Trumbull should you accept this invitation I think Mr & Mrs Hamlin will meet you here²

2 Lincoln wrote to Chandler on August 31 that he recalled their meeting at Kalamazoo in 1856. Lincoln appreciated the invitation but declined because, "It is the opinion of friends, backed by my own judgment, that I should not really, or apparently, be showing myself about the country" (*Collected Works*, IV, 102-03).

Very Truly Yours

Z. Chandler