

Abraham Lincoln papers

From William L. Schley to Abraham Lincoln, February 23, 1861

Private

Balt. City

Feb. 23 1861

Dear Sir.

You will pardon my note, not having a personal acquaintance, but I deem it due to you and myself, to explain a matter in which I am interested. I am a warm and politically attached friend besides was as active here in your success and election, as any one who espoused your cause & "Republican" principles. A vast crowd was present at the Depot to see you arrive, this morning, but at "Ten" you may judge the disappointment at the announcement of your "passage" through unseen unnoticed and unknown — it fell like a thunder clap upon the community — was denied as a "hoax" — &c. until the truth was made beyond a doubt— A large "police force" was present to preserve the peace, besides your many friends to resist attack — which I now declare was meditated and determined— By your course you have saved bloodshed and a mob.

You would have been insulted and wrong committed, and in a letter of mine, dated at this City, the 21st inst, Signed "faithfully" ————" you had "my views"— They are true and I thought it my duty to so advise— I did not sign my name or write in my proper hand, from the fact that I did not want it known at the time, from or by whom written. I was well advised, and knew that the course of some of "our own side" would do you harm and bring discredit on you here if carried out. The programme, as it was made out was not fair or just to the "Republican party," having been done upon no concert of action of its members, and by a "clique" to glorify themselves — of this I am satisfied you have been advised by those who know. I have thus explained and am rejoiced to know of your safe arrival in the "Capitol." I desire and request, most respectfully, that my note will be kept private and unknown, relying upon the fact and truth that it was done simply, from the best motive and desire of my heart, as an advisory measure and caution & to enforce upon you caution— I hope to see you before many days, face to face— I remain

Respectfully Your Obt. &c.

Wm Louis Schley