

**General Joseph E. Johnston**  
**to**  
**Lt. Gen. William H. Hardee, et al., 31 January 1864**

Lieutenant General Hardee  
Major General Cheatham  
Major General Hindman  
Major General Cleburne  
Major General Stewart  
Major General Walker  
Brigadier General Bate  
Brigadier General Anderson

General:

I have just received a letter from the Secretary of War in reference to Major General Cleburne's memoir read in my quarters about the 2nd instant. In this letter the honorable Secretary expresses the earnest conviction of the President "that the dissemination or even promulgation of such opinions under the present circumstances of the Confederacy, whether in the Army or among the people, can be productive only of discouragement, distraction, and dissension. The agitation and controversy which must spring from the presentation of such views by officers high in the public confidence are to be deeply deprecated, and while no doubt or mistrust is for a moment entertained of the patriotic intents of the gallant author of the memorial, and such of his brother officers as may have favored his opinions, it is requested that you communicate to them, as well as all others present on the occasion, the opinions, as herein expressed, of the President, and urge on them the suppression, not only of the memorial itself, but likewise of all discussion and controversy respecting or growing out of it. I would add that the measures advocated in the memorial are considered to be little appropriate for consideration in military circles, and indeed in their scope pass beyond the bounds of Confederate action, and could under our constitutional system neither be recommended by the Executive to Congress nor entertained by that body. Such views can only jeopard among the States and people unity and harmony, when for successful co-operation and the achievement of independence both are essential."

Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. E. Johnston,  
General

P.S. -- Major-General Cleburne: Be so good as to communicate the views of the President, expressed above, to the officers of your division who signed the memorial.

J. E. Johnston

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SOURCE: Robert F. Durden, *The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), pages 66-67.