

The Press: President Lincoln's Philadelphia Organ

DURING the Civil War John W. Forney's Philadelphia *Press* came to be known as the special local organ of President Lincoln. Shortly after his election as clerk of the House of Representatives in February, 1860, Forney took up residence in Washington and continued to live there throughout the war. In his large rooms in the "Mills House," a commodious dwelling on Capitol Hill, the influential editor entertained his wide circle of friends, men prominent in public affairs, congressmen, cabinet members, and army officers.¹ In time spared from official duties and political conferences he wrote letters from Washington for the *Press* under the pen-name "Occasional," and also directed its management by frequent telegrams to John Russell Young who in 1862 at the age of twenty-one was placed for a time in charge of the Philadelphia paper.² In the heat of political campaigns as well as on other occasions the busy editor was in demand as a speaker.³

The *Press* had supported Stephen A. Douglas in the presidential canvass of 1860, but upon Lincoln's election showed a marked disposition to support his administration. Further evidence of its

¹ John W. Forney, *Anecdotes of Public Men*, I. 75-76; Howard K. Beale (ed.), *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859-1866* (American Historical Association *Annual Report* for 1930, Washington, 1933), IV. 203. Edward Bates to Forney, November 20, 1861; M. Blair to Forney, November 21, 1861, Forney letters in the Personal Miscellany, Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, hereinafter cited as Forney MSS.; Forney to Salmon P. Chase, December 17, 1862, Chase MSS. in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

² Benjamin Perley Poore, *Perley's Reminiscences*, II. 127-28; Forney to Young, December 22, December 31, 1862; March 24, [1863?], John Russell Young MSS. in the Library of Congress; for Young see a biographical article in the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, II. 214. At times Forney asked Young to write the "Occasional" letter.

³ E. O. Morgan *et al.* to Forney, October 9, 1863, Forney MSS.; Philadelphia *Press*, July 20, 1863; John B. Moore, *Works of James Buchanan*, XI. 275; Forney to Salmon Chase, September 24, 1863, Chase MSS.

affiliation with the victorious party came when the *Press*, at the end of December, 1860, put forward the claims of John Hickman, formerly a Douglas Democrat but now a Republican,⁴ for the seat in the United States Senate about to be filled by the Pennsylvania legislature. Immediately the Democratic *Pennsylvanian* cried out that the *Press* no longer took "the trouble to wear a mask," but was openly Republican. The purpose of its former deception, averred the Democratic organ, was to carry Douglas Democrats into the Republican camp:

From the moment it took its position in the late canvass, it has been gravitating with constant . . . approaches to Black Republicanism. It hoped, by adroit management, to draw its partisans on with it, imperceptibly to themselves, and at the lucky moment to betray them all into the hands of the enemy. How many it has succeeded in debauching and selling we have no means of knowing—enough perhaps to fill its contract and to entitle it to its reward from the Abolitionists.⁵

In the secession crisis then upon the country the *Press*, with other Philadelphia papers, urged concessions to the South. To refuse "to sacrifice a few cherished prejudices or stubborn convictions to save a great empire" seemed to the *Press* folly indeed.⁶ Yet should generous treatment fail, it recognized that "harsher measures" must be adopted.⁷ In anxiety to promote the adoption of "a fair compromise" the *Press* proposed that the settlement drawn up by the Peace Conference be submitted to the vote of the people.⁸ All efforts at compromise, however, failed largely because of the stubborn opposition of the Republicans to any proposition permitting the extension of slavery. On this point Lincoln was adamant, writing, "The tug has to come, and better now than later."⁹

Yet the *Press* did not have a word of criticism for the president-elect. On the contrary it praised the President's inaugural address,¹⁰ and avowed an editorial purpose "to strengthen Mr. Lincoln in all

⁴ *Biographical Directory of Congress, 1774-1927*, p. 1094.

⁵ *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*, January 1, 1861.

⁶ *Philadelphia Press*, January 14, 1861.

⁷ *Philadelphia Press*, January 2, 1861.

⁸ *Philadelphia Press*, February 23, March 1, 1861.

⁹ John G. Nicolay and John Hay (eds.), *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, VI, 77-78.

¹⁰ *Philadelphia Press*, March 5, 1861.

honorable endeavors to promote the general welfare."¹¹ When Fort Sumter fell under rebel fire and Lincoln called for troops, the *Press* declared that the Confederates must be dealt with "as envenomed and implacable enemies."¹² Soon the seemingly needless delay in the forming of an army brought newspaper criticism down upon the administration, but the *Press* struck back at the critics, praising the "ENERGY OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND ITS PREPARATIONS FOR WAR."¹³

Lincoln shortly had an opportunity to repay the defender of his administration. When the Thirty-seventh Congress met for the first time in July, 1861, Forney failed to secure his re-election as clerk of the House. Then the President used his influence to secure Forney's election as secretary of the Senate with a salary of thirty-six hundred dollars a year.¹⁴

Forney's editorial services to the administration were not confined to the *Press*, for in 1861 he established the *Sunday Chronicle* at the capital. On November 3, 1862, he began to publish a daily edition, it was said, at the suggestion of the President who feared the effect in the Army of the Potomac of criticism by the New York *Tribune*.¹⁵ As an administration organ the *Chronicle* had considerable influence. Articles from the pens of Caleb Cushing, Robert J. Walker, Francis J. Grund, and other able writers strengthened the paper. It had a large circulation, ten thousand copies going daily to the Army of the Potomac, and received lucrative government advertising—\$4776.34 from the state department alone in two years.¹⁶ Moreover, good berths were not lacking for the members of its staff. Thus Daniel R. Goodloe, an able editorial writer, was appointed by Lincoln one of the commissioners of emancipation in the District of Columbia, and William Reitzel, Forney's brother-in-law connected with the business management of the paper, be-

¹¹ Philadelphia *Press*, March 9, 1861.

¹² Philadelphia *Press*, April 15, 19, 1861.

¹³ Philadelphia *Press*, May 2, 1861.

¹⁴ Forney, *Anecdotes*, I. 167; Statement by Luther Ringwalt, October 19, 1877, in John W. Forney, *Forty Years of American Journalism* (Philadelphia, 1877), 14; Act of March 14, 1862, *United States Statutes at Large*, XII. 355, also 683; Philadelphia *Press*, June 22, 1861; Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin*, July 17, 1861.

¹⁵ Roy F. Nichols, article on Forney, *Dictionary of American Biography*, VI. 527.

¹⁶ *United States Official Register* (1865), 17.

came a route agent for the post office department.¹⁷ Daniel Carpenter Forney, a cousin of the proprietor, was publisher of the *Chronicle* and at one time, according to a family genealogy, held a place in the treasury department at Washington.¹⁸

Forney himself was intimate with President Lincoln, and later recorded that he had made "frequent visits" to the White House "as Secretary of the Senate and editor of the *Chronicle*."¹⁹ In later years John Russell Young, at that time the editor's private secretary in Washington, recalled that "Forney was as near to Lincoln as any one of those in politics or journalism."²⁰ Indeed, the confidence of the administration in the editor was then common report, for the Democratic *Evening Journal* declared that "Occasional" was supposed "to be partially in the secrets of the Cabinet."²¹ The *Age*, likewise, frequently referred to the *Press* as "the President's organ,"²² and stated that "Occasional" was "generally reputed to be" a "confidential friend and adviser of Mr. Lincoln and his Cabinet."²³

¹⁷ Poore, *Perley's Reminiscences*, II. 128; Forney, *Anecdotes*, I. 229; Forney to Salmon P. Chase, August 20, 1863, Chase MSS.; Forney to Andrew Johnson, June 12, 1865, Forney MSS.; Forney to Young, October 17, 1861, Young MSS.; Forney to C. A. Walborn, April 26, 1862, Manuscript Collection of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania. For a sketch of Goodloe see Beale, *Bates' Diary*, 336n.; sums paid for departmental advertising appear in *United States Official Register* (1865), 17, 218-25.

¹⁸ H. O. F[olker], *Sketches of the Forney Family*, 86; Ada Tyng Griswold, ed., *Catalogue of Newspaper Files in Historical Society of Wisconsin* (Madison, 1911), 20; listed as publisher of *Chronicle* in *United States Official Register* (1865), 222.

¹⁹ Forney, *Anecdotes*, I. 39, 86, 167. Forney's reminiscence is supported by the following contemporary material: Forney to Hendrick Wright, October 6, 1861, Wright MSS.; Esther C. Cushman, ed., *Lincoln Letters Hitherto Unpublished, in the Library of Brown University and other Providence Libraries* (Providence, Rhode Island, 1927), 40; Lincoln to Forney, July 28, 1864, Nicolay and Hay, *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, X. 177; *Philadelphia Press*, April 18, 1865.

²⁰ John Russell Young, *Men and Memories, Personal Reminiscences* (New York, 1901), 54, see also 48. The main collection of Lincoln papers in the Library of Congress are inaccessible until 1947. Curtis W. Garrison, *List of Manuscript Collections in the Library of Congress to July, 1931* (American Historical Association *Annual Report* for 1930, Washington, 1931), I. 207.

²¹ *Philadelphia Evening Journal*, December 20, 1861.

²² *Philadelphia Age*, July 9, July 11, August 25, 1863. That Lincoln may even have written for the *Press* is suggested in a letter from Forney to Cameron on August 16, 1861: "Lest you should not see the President's article in *The Press* of today, I enclose it to you." Cameron MSS. in the Library of Congress.

²³ *Philadelphia Age*, August 22, 1863; March 19, 1864.

In these years Forney's intimacy with President Lincoln was reflected in the pages of the *Press*. That paper staunchly defended the President from criticism on the score of violating civil liberty by arbitrary arrests,²⁴ and lavishly praised his first annual message to Congress the conservative tone of which provoked murmurs of discontent in Republican ranks.²⁵ Frequently editorials preached "a universal confidence in the Administration,"²⁶ and to this end urged a union of parties for the purpose of eliminating partisan criticism.

Especially fitted by its former Democracy to make the appeal, the *Press* incessantly pleaded with Democrats to join hands with Republicans in the common cause,²⁷ and chided reluctant politicians with the query: "What do we care about Republicanism or Democracy when the nation is in peril?"²⁸ "The object of the proposed union of all loyal men" in Pennsylvania, the *Press* pointed out in 1862, was to elect "a loyal Legislature and a loyal Congressional delegation. In order to accomplish these essential things, the Democratic party, as now organized and controlled must cease to exist."²⁹

When the Democratic party refused to vanish at the behest of the *Press*, that journal began a virulent attack upon Francis W. Hughes, chairman of the central Democratic committee for the state, as a traitor. The basis of the charge was a resolution for the secession of Pennsylvania from the Union which Hughes had prepared for the consideration of a Democratic convention early in 1861. A fortnight before election day the *Press* lashed this resolution to its masthead under the caption: "THE PLATFORM OF TREASON, AS PREPARED BY THE LEADER OF THE BRECKINRIDGE PARTY

²⁴ Philadelphia *Press*, September 16, 18, 1861; December 13, 1862; March 5, 1863.

²⁵ Philadelphia *Press*, December 4, 1861. The extreme antislavery men were disappointed because Lincoln did not take a vigorous stand against slavery. One of them wrote that his communication to Congress was "a tame, timid, time-serving common place sort of a Message, cold enough with one breath, to freeze h-ll over." Arthur C. Cole, "President Lincoln and the Illinois Radical Republicans," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IV (1918), 422-23.

²⁶ Philadelphia *Press*, September 4, 1862; also August 13, September 13, 1861.

²⁷ Philadelphia *Press*, May 3, June 27, August 9, 10, September 7, 12, 19, 1861.

²⁸ Philadelphia *Press*, September 20, 1861.

²⁹ Philadelphia *Press*, May 7, 1862; union of parties was also discussed in issues for January 11, May 2, 1862.

IN PENNSYLVANIA.”³⁰ As the campaign drew to a close the *Press* tirelessly rang the changes on “THE TREASON OF THE BRECKINRIDGE DEMOCRACY,”³¹ and “THE DISLOYALTY OF THE BRECKINRIDGE LEADERS.”³² In his zeal to promote the cause Forney, according to ex-president Buchanan, at times resorted to “down-right falsehood.”³³

In the gubernatorial canvass of 1863 the editorial guns of the *Press* again thundered the charge of disloyalty; the Democratic candidate, George W. Woodward, was belabored as “an enemy of the country and a follower of the doctrines of the late Mr. Calhoun.”³⁴ In the course of the campaign the *Press* warned its readers that the Democrats “have drilled their newspapers into effective service, and from now until election every pen that can be employed, and every tongue that can speak will be busy misrepresenting the Administration, denouncing the war, and abusing the cause.”³⁵ To combat this malicious propaganda, the *Press* suggested among other things that loyal men should “patronize the loyal county paper. Strengthen the hands of the editor by words of encouragement, by contributions to his columns, and, in a more material way, by increasing his subscription list.”³⁶

Always energetic in the party cause, the *Press* outdid itself in advocating the re-election of President Lincoln. With a burst of enthusiasm the *Press* brought forward his name for a second term as early as January, 1864, and henceforth sang his praises unweariedly.³⁷ Sensing that General George B. McClellan would be the Democratic nominee, the *Press* began to heap abuse upon him in February.³⁸ When sentiment among Radical Republicans for John C. Frémont threatened Lincoln's chances of success, the *Press*

³⁰ Philadelphia *Press*, October 3 to 14, 1862.

³¹ Philadelphia *Press*, October 3, 1862.

³² Philadelphia *Press*, October 10, 1862.

³³ Buchanan to Dr. John B. Blake, November 27, 1862, Moore, *Works of Buchanan*, XI. 318.

³⁴ Philadelphia *Press*, September 8, 30, October 10, 1863.

³⁵ Philadelphia *Press*, September 2, 1863.

³⁶ Philadelphia *Press*, September 2, 1863.

³⁷ Philadelphia *Press*, January 15, 19, 21, February 24, 26, 27, 29, March 9, 11, 16, 17, 19, 23, 30, April 29, May 28, June 9, 1864.

³⁸ Philadelphia *Press*, February 5, 16, 1864.

vigorously attacked the movement.³⁹ As the campaign neared its conclusion the *Press* sought to discredit its opponents by identifying their cause with that of the Confederacy. Thus in an editorial on "DEMOCRATIC SUCCESS DESIRED BY THE REBELS,"⁴⁰ it insisted that "*the great and pressing want of the McClellan Democracy . . . was a sweeping defeat of the armies of the Union.*"⁴¹

While Forney's devotion to Lincoln governed in the main the editorial course of the *Press*, the able editor's friendship with Simon Cameron also left a mark upon its pages.⁴² While Secretary of War, Cameron's appointments of politicians to responsible positions in the army brought down upon him sharp criticism. The *Press*, however, defended the appointments, declaring that the Secretary had been "influenced by no other than the most patriotic motives."⁴³ A few weeks later Forney's oldest son, Philip R. Forney, received a commission as second lieutenant in the Ninth Infantry, and on Septem-

³⁹ Philadelphia *Press*, April 25, May 30, May 31, June 1, 4, 14, 1864.

⁴⁰ Philadelphia *Press*, September 3, 1864.

⁴¹ Philadelphia *Press*, September 23, 1864.

⁴² Alexander K. McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, II. 46-48, 135; Forney, *Anecdotes of Public Men*, I. 66-67, 76; John Hickman to Forney, May 2, 1861; Cameron to Forney?, May 14, 1861, Forney MSS. There are also a number of friendly letters on politics and patronage from Forney to Cameron in the Cameron MSS. See November 17, 1860; August 16, 18, 1861; April 19, June 11, July 23, 1862. Wein Forney, a cousin of John W., was a close associate of Cameron. Born in Lancaster, June 30, 1826, he learned the trade of printer in the office of the Lancaster *Intelligencer* when his cousin was its editor and proprietor. His career well illustrates the usual intermingling of journalism and politics. In 1845 he was employed on the Washington *Union*, then the organ of Polk's administration under Thomas Ritchie. After a short association with the *Pennsylvanian* he received a clerkship in the Philadelphia post office but continued to write for the press. In 1859 he accepted a place in the library of the House of Representatives, but a year later at Cameron's solicitation took charge of the Harrisburg *Telegraph*. After Lincoln's election he went to Washington as a correspondent for several papers and resumed his connection with the House library. Later he returned to the Harrisburg *Telegraph*, and subsequently edited other newspapers while serving as state librarian of Pennsylvania. H. O. F[olker], *Forney Family*, 88. In expressing his appreciation of Wein Forney's work in 1860, Governor-elect Andrew G. Curtin really pronounced a eulogy of the journalist's rôle and reward: "He is a reliable and faithful man and can be of great service to our party and we must take care of him." Curtin to Cameron, November 14, 1860, Cameron MSS. See also Wein Forney to Cameron, November 6, 1860; January 2, 14, June 30, 1862; September 9, 1863, Cameron MSS.

⁴³ Philadelphia *Press*, June 11, 1861; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, June 18, 1861. For a defense of a friend of Cameron accused of engineering "the swindling beef contract" see the *Press*, July 31, 1861.

ber 6, he became a first lieutenant.⁴⁴ Another son, James Forney, was made first lieutenant in the United States Marines at the tender age of eighteen, and was honorably mentioned for gallantry in the capture of New Orleans. That Cameron was in truth responsible for their commissions was confirmed when their mother wrote to the Secretary of War: "I cannot forbear the expression of my satisfaction at your kindness to my husband and my two sons . . . They are both grateful to you," and then added that her husband never failed "to speak of you and to defend you, with all the warmth of his nature."⁴⁵ The *Press* might well take an uncritical attitude toward the Secretary of War.

⁴⁴ Heitman, *Register of the United States Army*, 429. Forney was the father of six children, three boys and three girls. H. O. Folker, *Forney Family*, 84-85.

⁴⁵ Mrs. E. M. Forney to Cameron, undated [1861], Cameron MSS. Forney asked that his son be made paymaster of the Marines, but the author has found no evidence that he received this promotion. Forney to Captain G. V. Fox, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, November 15, 1862, Forney MSS. See also *United States Official Register* (1861), 177; (1863), 239; (1865), 266. Jacob D. Forney, born in and appointed from Pennsylvania, was an engineer in the office of the House of Representatives with compensation at \$1500 a year. The author has not found any evidence of relationship with John W. Forney. *United States Official Register* (1865), 305. In mid-November, 1861, an interesting proposal was made to Cameron by one Joseph Sailer, who wrote for the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, on behalf of Forney and himself. The revelatory character of Sailer's letter, unusually full as it is upon the attitude of at least two journalists toward their work, the obligation it creates, and a rather subterranean mode of reward, merits lengthy quotation: "Our mutual friend Forney, as we both know, is not half as rich as he ought to be, and I, though much less worthy, am probably still poorer. We are doing what we can for the Government, and I hope from truly patriotic motives; but, as profits necessarily result from the heavy expenditures daily making we do not see that zeal should be allowed to make us less worthy consideration in the division of business from which profits fairly arise. Situated as he and I are, there are few things in which we can consistently take part. But one just such enterprise now offers. One which is perfectly legitimate and right in itself, and one which with propriety you can give a direction (with a perfect understanding between all parties)—that will serve and oblige both the Colonel and myself. I allude to the proposition of Mr. Secor of New York to make repairs of, and furnish stores, &c. to ships in your department fitting out at New York, and also, to furnishing stores and supplies to Forts and Fortifications. All this is directly in the line of Mr. Secor's business, and of course can be as cheaply and as satisfactorily done by him as any other. I hope you will give the subject attention and Mr. Secor an early interview." Sailer to Cameron, November 19, 1861, Cameron MSS. Although Sailer soon interviewed the Secretary of War on the matter, by November 25, 1861, he had had no further word about it, and was really disappointed because, as he wrote Forney, "It looks to me like the most legitimate thing offering, and being out of this City [Philadelphia] would not attract attention here." Sailer to Forney, November 25, 1861, Cameron MSS. Unfortunately the author has no further information on the fate of the proposal.

When, in January, 1862, Edwin M. Stanton succeeded Cameron, the *Press* praised the appointment,⁴⁶ and Forney wrote to the new Secretary, "Rest assured you have in me, as ever, a constant and a devoted supporter."⁴⁷ On February 19, 1862, Philip R. Forney received a commission as captain.⁴⁸ Relations, however, between Forney and Stanton did not run smoothly. On March 17 the Secretary of War ordered the suppression of the *Sunday Chronicle* of the previous day, and the arrest of all persons connected with the paper for the publication of information on army movements useful to the enemy.⁴⁹ Yet within four months the *Press* was ardently defending Stanton from the criticism of newspapers which, under the delusion that they could run the war department better than the Secretary, were undermining the faith of the people in the administration.⁵⁰ By the end of the year Forney's *Chronicle* was being described as "the Washington organ of the War Department."⁵¹ and somewhat later a correspondent wrote to Benjamin F. Butler of Forney, "Personally he is attached to Stanton."⁵² Ample testimony of the editor's admiration appears in his published recollections, where, years later, he left an intimation that the Secretary upon occasion may have guided the course of Forney's journals:

It was astonishing how this man, who had never participated in party warfare, comprehended the political situation. Fertile of suggestion, he was a mine of information to an editor. He thought quickly and wrote strongly. He would give a key-note for a campaign, which, sounded in the columns of a newspaper, would thrill a continent.⁵³

⁴⁶ *Philadelphia Press*, January 14, 1862.

⁴⁷ Forney to Stanton, undated [early 1862], Edwin M. Stanton MSS. in the Library of Congress.

⁴⁸ Heitman, *Register of the United States Army*, 429.

⁴⁹ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 18, 1862. The author has no information on the sequel. The general topic is treated by James G. Randall, "Newspaper Problem in its bearing upon Military Secrecy during the Civil War," *American Historical Review*, XXIII (1918), 303-23.

⁵⁰ *Philadelphia Press*, July 19, October 24, 1862.

⁵¹ *New York Herald*, December 1, 1862. Stanton was listed among Forney's friends in J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia 1609-1884*, III, 2055.

⁵² Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler* (Norwood, Massachusetts, 1917), V, 598-99.

⁵³ Forney, *Anecdotes of Public Men*, I, 186.

Certainly Forney should have been responsive to the wishes of the Secretary, for in the years from 1861 to 1865 he received ten thousand dollars for advertising from the war department.⁵⁴

The *Press* had advertising from the other departments as well, and a considerable quantity from the sheriff of Philadelphia County. A suggestion that the amounts received from patronage might go far beyond any figures available came on September 28, 1861, when the *Philadelphia News*, angry at the *Press*, declared: "Forney, for the two years past, has been the recipient of profits amounting to about \$100,000, all of which he obtained through the influence of the People's or Republican party."⁵⁵

Forney's services were probably worth all he received. Far more than most editors he realized the part that the newspaper press might play in winning the war,⁵⁶ and filled his journals with propaganda well calculated to inspire the people and to strengthen their morale. Thus, one *Press* editorial portrayed "THE ROMANCE OF WAR,"⁵⁷ while others beat the drum for the recruiting officer, and trumpeted a call to arms.⁵⁸ Occasionally the paper inflamed the passions of hate by dwelling on alleged atrocities committed by the "incarnate devils in Confederate gray."⁵⁹ More frequently editorials depicted Southern distress and demoralization—the lack of food, clothing, and other necessities.⁶⁰ As further means of bolstering the faltering enthusiasm for the war, the *Press* exaggerated Union victories while it minimized Union defeats.⁶¹ An interesting example of the latter was the *Press*' treatment of the battle at Fredericksburg. On December 13, 1862, General Ambrose E. Burnside threw the blue hosts against Lee, intrenched in an impregnable posi-

⁵⁴ *United States Official Register* (1863), 197-98; (1865), 218-225.

⁵⁵ *Philadelphia News*, September 28, 1861.

⁵⁶ Editorials in the *Philadelphia Press* repeatedly commented on the part newspapers were playing in the war: May 29, July 19, 1862; May 28, June 25, 1864; March 17, 1865.

⁵⁷ *Philadelphia Press*, October 17, 1861.

⁵⁸ *Philadelphia Press*, October 18, 1861; July 22, 31, August 5, 6, 12, 29, 1862; March 18, April 3, 1863; December 24, 29, 1864; January 27, February 27, April 10, 1865.

⁵⁹ *Philadelphia Press*, May 8, 1865; also May 16, August 9, 1862; June 6, 22, 1863.

⁶⁰ *Philadelphia Press*, October 1, November 11, 1861; March 19, 25, 1862; January 27, May 27, 1864; January 27, February 1, 3, 21, March 28, 1865.

⁶¹ *Philadelphia Press*, February 19, April 10, 12, May 14, July 7, September 1, 2, 1862; February 7, 1863.

tion, only to receive a bloody and overwhelming defeat which completely demoralized his army.⁶² When the news came, Forney telegraphed to Young in charge of the *Press*: "Don't treat the affair at Fredericksburg as a disaster."⁶³ The next day the headlines of the paper gave no hint of the truth, while an editorial assured its readers that "the wild rumors of defeat and disaster are without foundation."⁶⁴

Another variety of propaganda in the pages of the *Press* sprang from Forney's close relations with Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase. Assisted by Chase's influence Forney secured subscriptions for his paper among the clerks in the government service.⁶⁵ In return the *Press* gave the Secretary's financial policies strong support, and actively promoted the sale of government bonds by Jay Cooke.⁶⁶ Appreciating the efforts in his behalf, Chase followed closely the editorials of the *Press* and *Chronicle*.⁶⁷ Occasionally he sent Forney suggestions for articles, and once pointed out objectionable material which had appeared by error. When the editorial comment of the papers was especially pleasing, he expressed his approval.⁶⁸

While Forney was closely bound to Lincoln, he was also very friendly with a group of Radical Republicans in conflict with the President. Among important Radicals Forney numbered as his

⁶² James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, IV. 194-99.

⁶³ Forney to Young, December 16, 1862, Young MSS.

⁶⁴ Philadelphia *Press*, December 17, 1862.

⁶⁵ Forney to Chase, January 3, 1862, Chase MSS. Adam J. Glossbrenner while in Washington observed that Judge Lieb, a former Democrat, "was engaged in procuring, by intimated menaces, subscriptions among the clerks in the Departments to the Philada *Press*." Glossbrenner to Buchanan, February 17, 1862, Buchanan MSS.

⁶⁶ Philadelphia *Press*, December 10, 1861; January 31, February 8, June 28, July 16, 17, 1862; January 17, 28, April 8, May 2, 1863. The close tie with the great banking house appears in the fact that Henry D. Cooke, brother and business associate of Jay Cooke, wrote editorials on the bank bill and the loan which were published in the *Press* and more especially the *Chronicle*, Forney's paper at Washington. Furthermore, John Russell Young communicated with Jay Cooke himself on financial editorials for the *Press*. Henry D. Cooke to Jay Cooke, November 3, 1862; January 26, February 11, 1863; Clarkson to Jay Cooke, January 15, 1863; John R. Young to Jay Cooke, January 20, 1863, Cooke MSS., in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁶⁷ Forney to Chase, January 21, 1863, Chase MSS.

⁶⁸ Chase to Forney, August 13, 25, 1863; February 25, March 28, 1864, letter-press copies, Chase MSS.

friends not only Chase, Cameron, and Stanton, but also William Pitt Fessenden, Charles Sumner, Benjamin F. Wade, and Thaddeus Stevens.⁶⁹ The Radicals wished to strike vigorous blows at slavery, but Lincoln long resisted their demands. His "paramount object," he explained, was "to save the Union," and "not either to save or destroy slavery."⁷⁰ Although Forney sympathized with the views of his Radical friends,⁷¹ the *Press* did not criticize the conservative policy of the President. Thus, although the *Press* in September, 1861, applauded Frémont's proclamation,⁷² it held its peace when Lincoln countermanded the antislavery stroke.⁷³ In the months that followed, the *Press* seemed to vacillate, at times hinting at the advisability of Radical measures and then again taking a more conservative line in perfect accord with the President's policy.⁷⁴ In the spring when General David Hunter issued a proclamation akin to Frémont's, the *Press* awaited Lincoln's repudiation before commenting. Then while thoroughly approving the President's action, Forney's paper nevertheless found "a sweet satisfaction" in Hunter's course, and added that "if the disloyalty of South Carolina continues, the plan of Gen. Hunter must be accepted." Meanwhile the *Press* preferred "to follow the lead of Mr. Lincoln."⁷⁵ By midsummer, however, the *Press* began to grow dissatisfied.⁷⁶ Then, its patience with conservative tactics exhausted, an

⁶⁹ In addition to materials already cited showing Forney's relations with Cameron, Stanton, and Chase, see Scharf and Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, III. 2055; Forney to R. F. Paine, December 6, 1861; Forney to Fessenden, April 29, 1863, Forney MSS.

⁷⁰ Lincoln's reply to Horace Greeley's famous "Prayer of Twenty Million," August 22, 1862. Nicolay and Hay, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, VIII. 15-16.

⁷¹ The New York *Herald*, December 1, 1862, referred to Forney's papers as "radical," and said that Forney had "the confidence of a part of the administration," a reference possibly to the fact that the cabinet was divided between Conservatives and Radicals. For indications of Forney's Radical position within the Republican party, other than editorials, see Forney to Fessenden, April 29, 1863, Forney MSS.; Forney to Chase, September 24, 1863, Chase MSS.; report of impromptu speech by Forney, *Philadelphia Press*, October 20, 1864.

⁷² *Philadelphia Press*, September 5, 1861.

⁷³ *Philadelphia Press*, September 16, 1861.

⁷⁴ *Philadelphia Press*, October 17, 24; November 11, December 4, 1861; March 7, 18, 27; April 4, 8, 10, 17, 22, 24, 25, May 6, 1862.

⁷⁵ *Philadelphia Press*, May 20, 1862.

⁷⁶ Rather suppressed rumblings of a somewhat more militant Radicalism may be seen in editorials of the *Press* for June 18, 30, July 16, 1862.

editorial called for the adoption of a policy of emancipation which would raise a slave insurrection and end the war in a welter of blood on the hearthstones of the Confederacy:

A million able-bodied men await but our word to ally themselves with us bodily, as they are with us in heart. A magnificent black blister as a counter irritant! A guerilla power, such as the world has never seen. One which, once fairly set in motion, would call back not only the hordes which are desolating northern homes, but divert the aim of the whole rebel arm. Will we use it? Or shall we go on for another year paying bitterly in blood for our culpable irresolution? Shall we be content with general statements, as to "the desirableness of using every means that will secure our salvation," and so humbug ourselves into the belief that we are very bold? The cause is too great to permit such namby-pambyism; the crisis is too imminent to let us dawdle in general terms. We want *specific measures of the boldest kind*. We must save the State at any cost; swallow our prejudices; shut our hearts to the suggestions of the rebel devil in the shape of criminal leniency, and not only strike ourselves, but make those strike whose future is as dependent on this struggle as our own.⁷⁷

The criticism of Lincoln's policy in this editorial was a marked exception to the adulation which usually filled pages of the *Press*. When a number of weeks later the President issued his Emancipation Proclamation, there was no longer an occasion on this issue for disagreement between the patron and his organ. With the progress of the struggle the *Press* became increasingly abolitionist, advocating the use of colored troops, equal pay for Negro soldiers, and a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery.⁷⁸

As the war drew near to a close the Radical advocates of Negro emancipation became the proponents of a harsh reconstruction policy which by the enfranchisement of the former slaves would maintain the Republican party in power.⁷⁹ Although Forney was heartily in sympathy with such a course, the *Press* subserviently endorsed President Lincoln's lenient reconstruction plan which allowed suffrage qualifications to be determined by the former Confederates. As early as March, 1864, the *Press* suggested the propriety of granting Negro soldiers the right to vote,⁸⁰ and in October of the

⁷⁷ Philadelphia *Press*, July 30, 1862.

⁷⁸ Philadelphia *Press*, February 10, 12, 18, 19, 23, March 29, 31, April 19, 22, May 4, June 18, 20, 1864; February 1, 3, 15, March 17, 1865.

⁷⁹ Howard K. Beale, *The Critical Year* (New York, 1930), 173-195.

⁸⁰ Philadelphia *Press*, March 22, 1864.

same year Forney wrote to Fessenden that he was convinced of the necessity of Negro suffrage protected by Congress. This, he felt, would give the Republicans the South "in perpetuity."⁸¹ Later, however, the *Press* fully endorsed the ideas which Lincoln set forth in his last public address, April 11, 1865, when he opposed granting the suffrage to the great mass of Negroes.⁸² After the President's death the *Press* recurred to its advocacy of harsh measures toward the South.⁸³ Indeed, one editorial looked upon Lincoln's assassination as the beneficent intervention of Providence because it cleared the way for a Radical policy of reconstruction:

But the loss we have sustained—the loss of Abraham Lincoln, that good and great man—is one which has been determined on by God. It is—we say this with reverence, but unhesitatingly—to serve God's purpose that he has been taken from us. A sterner and less gentle hand may at this juncture have been required to take hold of the reins of Government.⁸⁴

The *Press* expected that Andrew Johnson, the new President, would follow "a sterner and more decided course" with the leading Confederates.⁸⁵ Before long the paper became a rabid proponent of severity in reconstruction.

Thus the war ended, and North and South, long parted, were again united. One Northerner, reviving his friendship with Howell Cobb of Georgia, epitomized for the Southerner the history of the Philadelphia *Press* during the Civil War: "Forney by his devotion to Lincoln has made money, and is the proprietor of the 'organ' at Wash'n and the Press in Philada."⁸⁶

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⁸¹ Forney to Fessenden, October 21, 1864, Forney MSS.

⁸² Philadelphia *Press*, April 12, 1865; Nicolay and Hay, *Collected Works of Lincoln*, XI. 89. Perhaps Samuel Wilkeson referred to Forney's early course on reconstruction when he wrote to Benjamin F. Butler concerning the editor: "Politically he has been for a year spreading a marriage feast for the restored Union and 'our erring brothers.'" *Correspondence of Benjamin F. Butler*, V. 598-99.

⁸³ Philadelphia *Press*, April 22, 25, May 11, 1865.

⁸⁴ Philadelphia *Press*, April 17, 1865.

⁸⁵ Philadelphia *Press*, April 17, 1865.

⁸⁶ J. D. Hoover to Howell Cobb, August 31, 1865, Ulrich B. Phillips, *Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, Howell Cobb* (American Historical Association *Annual Report*, 1911, Washington, 1913), II. 666.