



# Provincial Marine

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Union Pacific Rail Road Company  
Secretary's Office  
13 WILLIAM ST  
New York, New York  
1864

To His Excellency  
Abraham Lincoln  
President of United States

You please the honor to ask your approval of the permanent location of the first one hundred miles of the Union Pacific Rail Road as indicated by the map forwarded to the Department of the Interior on the 24<sup>th</sup> ult.

With great respect  
Yours Truly  
C. F.

Executive Mansion  
November 4<sup>th</sup> 1864.

The permanent location of the Union Pacific Rail road for one hundred miles west from Omaha, Nebraska, as shown by the map thereof certified by the President and Secretary of said Company, Oct. 19, 1864, is hereby approved.

Abraham Lincoln

## Expediency

Though there are some things that I wish Lincoln had never said, it's only recently that I learned he was complicit in using **slavery by another name** to build the Union Pacific Railroad. In reading about the Union Pacific Railroad, I came across the use of forced labor to

complete the railroad during war time. Such labor involves kidnapping, armed guards, and killing people trying to escape. The book alleged that the President knew Durant the first president of the railroad, and approved of such labor or at least acquiesced. I know that the building of the railroad was expedient. The country, already torn by Civil War, needed a railroad to tie parts of the country together. But when you are fighting against slavery, surely it is a bad thing to use a kind of slavery.

The letter above (taken from *Trains, the Magazine of Railroading, February 2009*) is not about this forced labor, it's a short note scrawled by one friend to another with an equally short friendly reply. The letter simply shows that the two men were friends, and suggests that, yes, the President could indeed look the other way while his friend did some unsavory things for expediency.

But of course after the Civil War the South was bankrupt and looking for ways to get back on its feet. One of the ways it chose, **for expediency**, was to use forced labor. And the South had no further to look than the methods used by Union Pacific during its race towards the Pacific. How to get this forced labor? Charge someone on some trumped up charge, get him in the forced labor system, and keep him there by whatever means were expedient. Any wonder that blacks distrust the police and the judicial system. So the election of Obama meant a great deal to the USA. It meant a great deal to blacks throughout the world. It also gives hopes to the first nations of both Canada and the USA.

The cartoon on page 5 reflects how much Obama is being asked to do. Repair the Constitution, repair all the damage done by torn up treaties. Of 370 treaties with the first nations, how many do you think have been honoured? If you guessed none you would be correct. If you are interested in this question, you might want to read Ronald Wright's *What is America?* or John Ralston-Saul's *THE FAIR COUNTRY*. The first one looks at the USA and the second looks at Canada.