

Senators' Statements on the Trial of Andrew Johnson

1

This is one of the last great battles with slavery. Driven from these legislative Chambers; driven from the field of war, this monstrous power has found a refuge in the Executive Mansion. ...Nobody can question it. Andrew Johnson is the impersonation of the tyrannical Slave Power. In him it lives again.

—Charles Sumner

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

2

The formal accusation is founded on certain recent transgressions, enumerated [listed] in articles of impeachment, but it is wrong to suppose that this is the whole case. ...It is unpardonable to higggle over words and phrases when for more than two years the tyrannical pretensions of this offender ... have been manifest in their terrible, heartrending consequences.

—Charles Sumner

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

3

If the President issued an order for the removal of Mr. Stanton and the appointment of Thomas without advice and consent of the Senate, it being then in session, then he acted in palpable violation of the plain letter of the Constitution, and is chargeable with a high misdemeanor in office. The production of his own order removing Stanton, and of his letter of authority to Thomas, commanding him to take possession of the War Office, are all the proofs necessary to establish his guilt.

—Richard Yates

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

4

It is ... charged that Andrew Johnson has violated the Constitution. The fact may be so, but where is the evidence of it to be found in this record? ... Once set the example of impeaching a President for what, when the excitement of the hour shall have subsided, will be regarded as insufficient causes ... no future President will be safe who happens to differ with a majority of the House and two thirds of the Senate on any measure deemed by them important, particularly if of a political character. ...What then becomes of the checks and balances of the constitution, so carefully devised and so vital to its perpetuity? They are all gone.

—Lyman Trumbull

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

5

I cannot agree to destroy the harmonious working of the Constitution for the sake of getting rid of an unacceptable President. Whatever may be my opinion of the incumbent, I cannot consent to trifle with the high office he holds. I can do nothing which, by implication, may be construed into an approval of impeachments as a part of future political machinery.

—James Grimes

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

6

To the suggestion that popular opinion demands the conviction of the President..., I reply that he is not now on trial before the people, but before the Senate. ...The people have not heard the evidence as we have heard it. The responsibility is not on them, but upon us. They have not taken an oath to “do impartial justice according to the Constitution and the laws.” I have taken that oath.

—William P. Fessenden

Restate in your own words: _____

For Conviction

Against Conviction

To what degree does this quotation raise political issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

To what degree does this quotation raise constitutional issues? 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5