

Washington, Feb. 22nd, 1864.

My dear Mr Garrison,

Your note is received, and I have given your photograph to Mr Stanton with your message. He expressed his gratification and thanks, and hopes you will in a few months be able to visit Washington.

You say some of our friends speak harshly of my motion to amend the bill concerning the pay of colored troops so as to fix the first day of the year. It is not pleasant to be sharply censured by friends when one does the best he can. I sometimes think after going so many years to the cause that our friends at home might be willing to trust me here. But so it is. I will to you explain the case. I introduced the joint resolution giving back pay and increase of pay. I got my committee to allow me to report it. In the Senate

it met with a strong opposition. A motion was made to strike out the retrospective clause. The Secretary of War to members denied that he had authorized the payment of more than ten dollars; - three fourths of the Senate would have voted to strike out the retrospective clause. So Mr Sumner proposed to amend so as to meet the cases of the five Regiments that had enlisted expecting full pay, and after debate it became apparent that we should be voted down. We got Congress to withdraw his amendment which would have carried three or four to one and I moved to amend so as to begin the year at full pay. The case was lost and I wanted to gain all I could. The bill allowing full pay might not become a law for two months to come and by making the time the first of the year I gained from two to four or five

months full pay for the colored
soldiers. I had carried the Senate
and secured a majority and we all
felt here that the friends of the col-
ored soldiers had won a great victory.
Judge then of my amusement when
I learned that our friends at home
were censuring me for an amend-
ment that went back ~~to~~ to the
first of the year in favor of the col-
ored soldiers. Mr Sumner's amendment
was voted down by a large majority
although it only applied to a few
Regiments that expected to have full
pay. There were not more than ten or
twelve members in favor of the
retrospective clause of the bill.

These
are the facts. We did all that men could
do - we kept the matter before the Senate
for days - we were in a small minority
yet we wroung from our opponents
a vote going back to the first of the
year. Do you think I ought to be

blamed for doing this. I have sent
word to some of these Regiments
that had promises of full pay
to send petitions here and we
will make special cases and
try and get their pay back to
the time of enlistment.

Do not print
this party note - you may state
these facts if you please. It is
rather hard when one works
as I have for weeks against all
odds to be censured but I must
learn to bear it bravely

Yours Truly
W. Wilson