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### Cabinet Battle #3 (Demo)

[WASHINGTON]

The issue on the table: a petition from a Quaker delegation in Philadelphia calling on Congress to end the African slave trade and abolish slavery, in all its forms. This petition was written and signed by Benjamin Franklin; it cannot go ignored. If this comes to a vote in Congress, what is the White House's position? Secretary Jefferson, you first. Tread lightly.

[JEFFERSON]

Sir

The constitution clearly states  
That the states have to wait  
Until eighteen-oh-eight to debate  
On whether to end the slave trade.  
And whether or not you want it, guys  
That is the final compromise we made.

[HAMILTON]

Sir, wait—

[JEFFERSON]

But for a second, let us say that we can legislate  
Unanimous emancipation. Freedom reigns, and yes, it's great.  
We cannot cure prejudice or righteous, desperate hate  
So back to Africa or do they get a separate state?  
In 1784, I tried to float banning slavery in the West.  
My notion didn't get a single vote.  
Slavery's a sin. It's growing like a cancer  
But we can't address a question if we do not have an answer

[HAMILTON]

Is it my turn? Good.

Plantation states are packed with promise makers

Do you realize the precious time these legislators wasted?

Institutionalizing slavery only multiplies our troubles

Wait till the 1800s, and their population doubles

You all know

This is the stain on our soul and democracy

A land of the free? No, it's not. It's hypocrisy

To subjugate, dehumanize a race, call 'em property

And say that we are powerless to stop it. Can you not foresee?

Sir, even you, you have hundreds of slaves

Whose descendants will curse our names when we're safe in our graves

How will the South find labor for its businesses?

How will Thomas Jefferson find his next mistresses?

[JEFFERSON]

How dare you

[HAMILTON]

Yet still, people follow like lemmings

All your hemming and hawing, while you're hee-hawing with Sally Hemings

[WASHINGTON]

That's enough

[HAMILTON]

Well you asked how I feel

I don't pretend to know the answer, but the question is real

[MADISON]

If I may, Mr. President?

[WASHINGTON]

Madison?

[MADISON]

Let's take this moment to establish a precedent

First of all, sir, we won't involve you in this

Imagine this debate with all of Congress; it's ruinous

I'll reassure the South, 1808 is still the year

That was agreed upon

That buys us time and assuages fear

I'll tell the North that on January 1st

Of that year, we'll ban importation, handling the worst

Once I get all this agreed upon, I'll pick up a pen

And introduce a motion never to discuss this again

[HAMILTON]

Mr. President!

[WASHINGTON]

Hamilton, if we support emancipation

Every single slave owner will demand compensation

And as for slandering Jefferson with talk of mistresses

Do you really wanna—

[MADISON/JEFFERSON]

Do you really wanna have that conversation?

[HAMILTON]

No

[WASHINGTON]

Madison, execute your plan to the letter

Let's hope the next generation thinks of something better