

## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SOTHEBY'S SETS A RECORD FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN

LINCOLN'S EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO A CHILDREN'S PETITION  
TO FREE "ALL THE LITTLE SLAVE CHILDREN"  
SELLS FOR \$3,401,000

**ALSO ESTABLISHES A RECORD FOR ANY PRESIDENTIAL MANUSCRIPT  
AND ANY AMERICAN MANUSCRIPT EVER SOLD AT AUCTION**

New York, NY - April 3, 2008: Today at Sotheby's a record was set for any Abraham Lincoln manuscript ever sold at auction when his heartfelt and passionate reply to a "Children's Petition to the President asking him to free all the little slave children in this country," from 1864, sold for \$3,401,000<sup>1</sup>. The letter, which is arguably Lincoln's most personal and powerful statement on God, slavery and emancipation, was purchased by an American private collector bidding over the telephone. Speaking of the manuscript, Selby Kiffer, Senior Vice President in Sotheby's Books and Manuscripts Department, commented, "It deserved to make a record price and it did, not only for Lincoln, but also for any Presidential or American manuscript ever sold at auction." The letter was the centerpiece of an auction of *Presidential and Other American Manuscripts* which also included other Lincoln rarities: the only known Lincoln signature from the dedication of the Gettysburg Cemetery, dated 19 November 1863, which commanded \$937,000, and a letter in which Lincoln articulates one of his guiding principals, "it is better to let the past go by quietly," which sold for \$121,000. Both documents were purchased by an American private collector bidding in the salesroom. Among the other highlights of the auction which totaled \$5,649,330, were: Calvin Coolidge's exceptional letter in which he sets out his views on his duties as President, which sold for \$85,000, surpassing a high estimate of \$20,000<sup>2</sup>; one of the most famous letters ever written by the abolitionist John Brown which brought \$82,000 (est. \$50/70,000); George Washington's letter to Colonel Daniel Brodhead ordering him to retaliate against Britain's Indian allies on frontier borders, which sold for \$76,000 (est. \$35/50,000); and a letter in which James Buchanan, Lincoln's predecessor, washes his hands of responsibility for the Civil War which achieved \$67,000 (est. \$25/35,000).

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<sup>1</sup> The previous record for a Lincoln manuscript was \$3.1 million achieved at Christie's New York in March 2002

<sup>2</sup> Estimates do not include buyer's premium