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(The first use of the film will be at the Lincoln Day Dinner
of the Republican State Central, County and Town Committees
of Rhode Island, held tonight, January 28, at Providence, R.I.)

James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President



THE WHITE HOUSE

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE SPECIAL LINCOLN
DAY ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT RECORDED IN
ADVANCE FOR USE BY THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL
COMMITTEE AT REPUBLICAN LINCOLN DAY DINNERS

My Fellow Americans—

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You concern yourselves with the conduct and management of government—from the smallest political unit to the topmost levels of the Federal Administration.

You are, therefore, in politics—even though you may hold no appointive or elective office. And you should, it seems to me, wear your political badge with some considerable pride.

For politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.

Politics must be the concern of every citizen who wants to see our national well-being increased and our international leadership strengthened.

In that combined sense, politics is the noblest of professions. In the ranks of that kind of politics, every American should be enrolled.

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From the very moment he repeated the oath as president until the tragic end, Abraham Lincoln's every act and every word were clearly aimed, shaped, sharpened and designed to serve that single purpose—the preservation of our country.

In the Emancipation Proclamation, at Gettysburg, in his two great inaugural addresses, in country other utterances and statements—in private letters to friends and critics, within his Cabinet and to the public—over and over and over again, always he seemed to be saying—

We are the trustees of the American heritage.

In this time, in this tragic war, we have but one responsibility—the protection of that heritage. Every thought we hold, every action that we take, every sacrifice we make—all these must be dedicated, single-mindedly, to this task. We must leave to the future an America that is whole, intact, strong, united—and still the land of freedom.

We are the trustees of the American heritage.

Tirelessly and stubbornly, he repeated it. Every tortuous moment of those last four years, he lived it.

Through his success, you and I are today the trustees of that same heritage. We, in our time, must pass on to our children's children this America—strong and still the land of freedom.

“The legitimate object of government,” declared Lincoln, “is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done but can not do at all, or can not so well do in their separate and individual capacities.”

So, preoccupied though he was with the crisis of impending secession and the onrushing tragedy of civil war, he clearly realized that other and continuing responsibilities of government had to be met if this nation was to remain whole, intact, strong, united and still the land of freedom.

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That mandate requires that always we address ourselves to the preservation of this nation against threat of any kind from any quarter whatsoever. We must preserve its basic system and the freedoms it guarantees to its citizens.

It requires also that we share Lincoln's concern for the proper role of government in helping and protecting all our citizens.

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To be dedicated to a single purpose—the freedom, strength, prosperity and peace of America—and to strive with all that's in us to advance the welfare of her citizens—that is the forward way we must seek for America. That is the legitimate purpose of Lincoln's party—a century ago, today and always.