



the equality under law which Lincoln defined as the purpose behind a bloody struggle a century ago. It is time for the Congress to respond--to give positive expression to the ideals for which men fought in the past. National honor, not the threat of civil strife, must be the motivating force by which all our citizens are accorded, ungrudgingly, the equal opportunity for which our system stands.

Thus Gettysburg is more than a historical reminder, important as that is. It is just as important that Abraham Lincoln gave voice to what must be a national objective for our generation. It is therefore fitting that we should meet here to mark the further perfection of this shrine to man's highest ideals as well as heroic deeds.

I am honored by the privilege of accepting the public-spirited donation of key tracts of land which will help round out this National Historical Park. I commend the two organizations which are responsible for making this event possible. They represent the finest aspects of the spirit that motivates preservation of our national heritage. The Military Order of the Loyal Legion has an illustrious history of patriotic devotion derived from the forebears of its membership, Union officers who served with distinction on these fields. The roots of the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association also reach deep into the soil of this valley and the study of its history. In the finest traditions of the conservation movement, its members have excited the concern of Americans everywhere to protect these battlefields for public use and inspiration.

To these organizations, therefore, and to the many private donors of large and small amounts, I extend the sincere thanks of the American public. On behalf of President Kennedy and Secretary Udall, I accept these lands and pledge to the donors that they will be conserved and dedicated solely to the purposes for which they have been tendered.

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