

NOTES

FORD'S THEATER

JANUARY 30, 1968

(note reverse side)

honored by the presence

we are privileged

✓ Tonight, ~~the people of America are privileged, through television,~~
~~to share an important occasion with distinguished performers and a~~
~~distinguished theater audience.~~ We mark the reopening of this historic
place where a great American, President Abraham Lincoln, came to
seek respite from his many burdens...and where, in his theater box,
he was taken from us. ~~Lincoln found the theater~~

Yet it was in the theater that he refreshed his spirit.

✓ The life of Lincoln is recorded in more than a

~~Lincoln left behind a million published words!~~ But, although

~~many of these words will be long remembered,~~ he left a far more
important legacy: The example of a humble but brave man, willing
to meet all trials and all adversities so that freedom might prevail
in this nation.

*Humor
&
Pathos.*

*His life is the story
of kindness and strength; Humility
and Honor. May we in our time
be worthy of his legacy.*

For, if our nation passes through trials today, it has passed through far more terrible trials in the past. And we have always moved further forward on our journey toward that fuller and freer society where peace, justice, brotherhood and human opportunity might be the right of every man.

Tonight, therefore, in the spirit of Lincoln, I ask all those who are privileged to share this occasion to rededicate themselves to the task of building that society and the America that ~~is, indeed,~~ ^{Lincoln knew to be} "the last, best hope of earth."

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Cards

NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

FORD'S THEATER

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JANUARY 30, 1968

Tonight, the people of America are privileged, through television, to share an important occasion with distinguished performers and a distinguished theater audience. We mark the reopening of this historic place where a great American, President Abraham Lincoln, came to seek respite from his many burdens...and where, in his theater box, he was taken from us.

Lincoln left behind a million published words. But, although many of those words will be long remembered, he left a far more important legacy: The example of a humble

but brave man, willing to meet all trials and all adversities so that freedom might prevail in this nation.

Today there are a small few in this country who have lost faith in our dream that freedom shall ultimately prevail. There are others -- discouraged by their burdens -- who would turn inward and away from their responsibilities to their neighbors.

I ask these Americans -- just as I ask the vast majority who retain their determination and their optimism -- to look once more to Lincoln...to have new faith in old American dreams.

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Tonight, therefore, in the spirit of Lincoln, I ask all those who are privileged to share this occasion to rededicate themselves to the task of building that society and the America that is, indeed, "the last, best hope of earth."

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Terrell -
do you want
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for file
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Not used

NOTES BY
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Stars shine in the darkness even when we
may not be able to see them.

Tonight, great stars of the entertainment
world present to this distinguished audience and to
the nation an Evening With the Cabinet.

It occurs in a shrine of freedom, forever
dedicated to a star of the Republic, a star of
humanity -- Abraham Lincoln.

How very appropriate it is that dynamic
artists help us feel anew the warm spirit of this
immortal statesman.

Abraham Lincoln dreamt the dream of a united
nation, and it came to pass. Of a people liberated
from bondage, and it ^{has} ~~began~~ to come to pass.

He was light, and the darkness of war could
not obscure his vision.

He was warmth and the cold of malice could not touch him.

His life, his words are recorded in more than one million published words. But far more, they are recorded in the annals of kindness, in the archives of greatness.

We in this theater are privileged to see tonight a stage as he saw it. And throughout the land, through the miracle of television, millions shall see as he saw from that box.

Let us then see America as he saw it, strengthen government as he wished it, unite America as he so earnestly strived.

May these performing artists -- these stars -- remind us of this light -- the light of Lincoln -- the light that shall never fail.

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NOTES
DEDICATION OF RESTORATION OF FORD'S THEATRE
January 21, 1968

We are here because there were two Abraham
Lincolns -- the Lincoln of statesmanship, the Lincoln
of poetry and literature.

Had he not -- before he was President --
been a poet at heart, he would not have felt so keenly,
~~so painfully~~, the ^{human} issues which drew him into politics
and towards ~~historical~~ greatness.

He carried with him to Washington and to the
White House this humanist sensitivity and responsiveness.

And the second Abraham Lincoln -- the President --
could carry unprecedented burdens because he ^{was able to} could find
release, ~~he could respond to the human condition,~~ in
poetry, in prose and in theatre. Lincoln could cry ^{and}
he could laugh, at the lines he read, ^{and} heard.

Carl Sandburg's magnificent biography of ~~Lincoln's War Years~~, tells how the President would
read poetry aloud at the White House.

One of his favorites -- for he had recited
it at Springfield and had carried it with him to
Washington -- was

Just best hope on earth

by William Knox. These are among the lines the President loved:

Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-flitting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

It goes on, a bit later;

Yea, hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain:
And the smile and the tear, the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye; 'tis the draught of a breath
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud;
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

Abraham Lincoln *came here to Ford's Theatre,*
~~might not have had the opportunity~~

to come to Ford's Theatre had he not been President, ~~and~~

~~He did come here~~ seeking respite from his office, many times.

~~But~~ he would not have come to this Theatre had he not been

poet before he was politician and President.

Many years ago, on the eve of World War II,
Dorothy Thompson, ~~one of our~~ ^{an} outstanding newspaperwomen,
explained and defined the poetic spirit in terms which could
have been meant for Lincoln. ~~For fit him, they do:~~

"... The poet's nerves are a sort of radio sending
and receiving station; they quiver to waves which
leave the stolid undisturbed. It is the joy and the
agony of the poet to feel more than what happens
to himself; to feel and respond to what happens to
people he has never met, never seen, far away,
nothing too far away.

"It is the curse of his imagination to see -- to see,
though staring at a blank wall. To see forward and
back, in the present, what was, and what is coming.
When joy and peace are the routine of the times,
he is the most joyous, the most expansive; when
conflict and violence are the routine, he is
wounded a thousand times and felled with a
thousand blows."

Lincoln, the poet, did suffer those blows.

But he absorbed them and did not waver.

And neither joy nor agony could diminish his hope
that man -- all men -- would be free, and that harmony in
his land would lead it to new heights.

This is why we dedicate Ford's Theatre. Because
Lincoln was poet, and President. ~~But forever, he was~~
~~humanist.~~

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