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# Secession Will Destroy Democracy

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**Indianapolis, Indiana February 11, 1861**

In all trying positions in which I shall be placed, and doubtless I shall be placed in many such, my reliance will be upon...the people of the United States; and I wish you to remember, now and forever, that it is your business, and not mine, that if the union of these States and the liberties of these people shall be lost, it is but little to any one man of fifty-two years of age, but a great deal to the thirty millions of people who inhabit these United States, and to their posterity in all coming time.

**Indianapolis, Indiana February 11, 1861**

I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind that not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you, is the question, Shall the Union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations?

**Message to Congress in Special Session July 4, 1861**

The distinct issue, "Immediate dissolution or blood"...embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question of whether a constitutional republic or democracy -- a government of the people, by the same people -- can or cannot maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether the discontented individuals -- too few in numbers to control the administration, according to organic law, in any case -- can always, upon the pretenses made in this case or on any other pretenses, or arbitrarily without any pretense, break up the government and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask: "Is there, in all republics, this inherent and fatal weakness? Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?"

**Annual Message to Congress December 1, 1862**

Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass, will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We -- even we here -- hold the power, and bear the responsibility. In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free - honorable alike in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of earth.

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## CONTACT THE PARK

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Hours are 8:30am-5:00pm, daily, except on  
Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Years  
Day, when the park is closed.



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