

Maryland Department Patriotic Instructors Message for October 2010

The Patriotism and Leadership of Abraham Lincoln

As we near election day in November, let us remember an earlier time when America also seemed to be moving towards a political and constitutional chaos. In Abraham Lincoln the nation found a man who would lead it through four arduous years of civil war and preserve the sacred Union that had been crafted by the founding fathers.

Abraham Lincoln was a sincere and passionate defender of the great republican principles first laid out in the Declaration of Independence by Jefferson and later codified in James Madison's United States Constitution. Lincoln had undoubtedly been brought up to believe that the prosperity of America, depended on the virtue of the people, as exemplified by self sacrifice. Virtue could be seen in every man's contribution of a portion of himself, lest the nation would face self destruction. Patriotism for an American, as Lincoln most likely saw it, would be defined by obedience to the law and discharge of the social responsibility and duties of his citizenship

On October 20th Lincoln received a confidential note which stated that the writer " On a recent visit to the east . . . was informed that a number of young men in Virginia had bound themselves, by oaths the most solemn, to cause your assassination, should you be elected." Many a man in receipt of such a letter might have sought to remove himself from the van guard of controversy which shrouded the political stage of the time. However, for Lincoln his love of country was a force stronger than that of self interest and Lincoln placed his trust in providence and was obedient to the call he had been given . Abraham Lincoln understood the value of his and every mans moral virtue to the betterment of the American nation. He weighed the merits of self interest and national interest and committed himself to the preservation of his nation.

Virtue was then and is still now the principal force at work in Patriotism. As Lincoln put aside his individuality and exemplified the ethics of Patriotism so must all the progeny of the founding fathers work to ensure the nations survival and prosperity for future generations yet unborn by exhorting virtue and self sacrifice

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