

ancestors may have had about the causes that divided our nation in the dark days of the Civil War. Our Civil War Centennial Commission wisely and judiciously took this fact into consideration in planning the four-year commemoration period. Very carefully the Commission steered clear of any action that might tend to reopen the wounds of that conflict. Our commemoration favored neither the South nor the North. On the contrary, its theme was the reunification of our country—the rebirth of freedom that Lincoln spoke about.

The plaque which we are about to unveil here emphasizes that theme, it is entitled “Maryland Remembers.” It states that in commemorating this centennial of the great struggle that temporarily divided our nation, no effort was made to assess blame, to decide who was right and who was wrong, to make a decision on the issues in controversy. On the contrary, we sought to commemorate the important events of the war in Maryland, and in so doing, to pay homage to the brave men who fought and died and to the citizens who suffered in a war in which people tried to do their duty as they saw it.

In dedicating this plaque, it is my hope and my prayer that all who see it will be reminded that a war that caused so much suffering and so much despair was not fought in vain. For out of the struggle we gained a strength and unity that has made us the greatest nation on the face of this earth.

ADDRESS, RATIFICATION DAY

ANNAPOLIS

January 14, 1965

I am delighted to once again have the opportunity of welcoming to our State capitol so many of Maryland’s distinguished citizens and I always look forward to participating with you in the ceremonics marking the anniversary of the signing of the ratification of the Treaty of Paris. To my mind, it was one of the most significant events in the history of our State and nation.

The event that we commemorate today is one of a series of historic actions that took place in the Old Senate Chamber of the State House of Maryland. This now famous room acquired its claim to the reverence of every American 181 years ago. It was the scene then of the establishment of our country’s first peace. The year was 1784 and the United