

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history," said Lincoln in an address to Congress in 1862. "We of this Congress and this administration, we will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. We, even we here, hold the power and bear the responsibility."

Lincoln didn't say that one side of the battle lay a Democratic victory and on the other side a Republican defeat or vice versa. Lincoln didn't say that this was a victory achieved without great compromise. Lincoln didn't say if you do things my way, with my party, we'll win this one.

He told the story of a nation that faced terrible consequences and yet had the extraordinary foresight and fortitude to charge ahead toward a victory that includes compromises.

"We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last best hope of earth."

His warning stands today.

Thank you and I yield back