**Document: Fragment on the Constitution and Union**
**Abraham Lincoln/January 1, 1861**



All this is not the result of accident. It has a philosophical cause. Without the Constitution and the Union, we could not have attained the result; but even these, are not the primary cause of our great prosperity. There is something back of these, entwining itself more closely about the human heart. That something, is the principle of “Liberty to all” — the principle that clears the path for all — gives hope to all — and, by consequence, enterprize, and industry to all.

The expression of that principle, in our Declaration of Independence, was most happy, and fortunate. Without this, as well as with it, we could have declared our independence of Great Britain; but without it, we could not, I think, have secured our free government, and consequent prosperity. No oppressed, people will fight, and endure, as our fathers did, without the promise of something better, than a mere change of masters.

The assertion of that principle, at that time, was the word, “fitly spoken” which has proved an “apple of gold” to us. The Union, and the Constitution, are the picture of silver, subsequently framed around it. The picture was made, not to conceal, or destroy the apple; but to adorn, and preserve it. The picture was made for the apple — not the apple for the picture.

So let us act, that neither picture, or apple shall ever be blurred, or bruised or broken.

That we may so act, we must study, and understand the points of danger.

**The 150th Anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia gave the following remarks prior to administrating the Oath of Allegiance to two dozen new American citizens.**

**"Before I administer the oath, I want to say a few words of welcome to the new citizens. What makes us Americans, what unites us, is quite different from that which unites other countries.**

**There's a word, 'unAmerican.' We used to have a House unAmerican Activities Committee. There's no equivalent word in foreign languages. It would mean nothing in French political discourse to refer to something as unFrench, or in German political discourse to refer to something as unGerman. It is only Americans, we Americans, who identify ourselves not by our blood or by our color, or by our race or by where we were born, but rather by our fidelity to certain political principles.**

**That's very strange. It's unique in human history, I believe.**

**We are, as you heard from the Director, a nation of immigrants, who have come here mostly for two reasons. First, for freedom. From the pilgrims in the 17th century to the Cubans and the North Koreans in the 20th and 21st centuries.**

**And that freedom, of course, is not free, as the dead who rest buried here can demonstrate. The last line of our 'Star Spangled Banner' is, 'the land of the free and the home of the brave.' The two go together. Freedom is for the brave.**

**The second reason they came, these immigrants, was for opportunity. My father, who was the most patriotic man I ever knew, used to say that in the old country, if your father was a shoemaker, you would be a shoemaker. And in America, you could be whatever you were willing to work hard enough to be and had the talent to be.**

**And his son ended up on the Supreme Court.**

**My Grandmother expected me to be President; I didn't quite make that. But it was possible. It is possible in America.**

**So welcome, my soon-to-be fellow citizens, to the nation of Americans. May America bring you all that you expect from it. And may you give it all that it expects from you."**