

# THE BANNER OF THE DAWN

An Oration

by  
Dr. John Wesley Hill



**Wetmore Declamation Bureau**

**Box 2695  
Sioux City, IA 51106**

**[www.wetmoredeclamation.com](http://www.wetmoredeclamation.com)  
Email: [speeches@wetmoredeclamation.com](mailto:speeches@wetmoredeclamation.com)**

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From the address, "Lincoln, the Mystic," delivered by Dr. Hill at the unveiling of the statue of Lincoln at Jersey City, June 14, 1930. Permission granted by the author to the WETMORE DECLAMATION BUREAU, Sioux City, Iowa.

... It is appropriate that this monument to the character and achievements of Abraham Lincoln should be unveiled on Flag Day. That flag is Lincoln's appropriate memorial. His face is reflected in it.

In its ample folds are written in letters of deathless light the principles for which Lincoln declared, when he participated in the flag raising at Philadelphia on his way to Washington, and which he proposed "to live for," and, if necessary "to die for."

His principles are living in it! Today it is the symbol of the cumulus glory of those principles--the Declaration of Independence--the chart and compass of all human rights; representative democracy, with constitutional safeguards for the protection of individuals and minorities; the might of right as against the right of might; the divine right of man as against the divine right of kings.

It means all that our civilization means--that the schoolhouse is the bulwark of American liberty, the ballot box is the ark of the American covenant, the courthouse the guarantee of American justice, and the home the cornerstone of American democracy.

It means the protection of our citizens at home and abroad, on every land and sea; it means that anarchy and mobs are un-American; that there is a legal remedy for every wrong; that dynamite is the weapon of the coward and force the instrument of the tyrant; that person and property, life and liberty must be inviolate beneath its ample folds; it means that education is the fortress of freedom and that religion is the foundation of civilization; it means the sanctity of our courts, that the scales of justice shall stand between weakness and strength, want and wealth, and guarantee simple equity to all. It means the right of property possession, and that the theory of confiscation is incongruous with the spirit of the constitution; it means the rights of labor capital and that all social and industrial progress must be by evolution and not by revolution.

It means national honesty, that there shall be no knavery in politics, no graft in office, no betrayal of trust and no violation of treaty. It means national unity, that we are the citizens of one country, bound together in such an indissoluble compact that we are invulnerable to any weapon formed against us.

It means national hospitality, that we welcome to our shores all refugees from oppression; that our fireside is broad enough for every man who loves our flag; that our citizenship is composed of all races whom "God hath made of one blood;" and that neither class nor caste nor racial nor religious distinctions shall mar our spirit of brotherhood.

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