

## ADDITIONAL VIEWS

### THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENTS

The American Civil War captures the imagination of people like no other event in our history. In bookstores most shelves in the history section are devoted to events of the 1860's. On weekends, battles are re-enacted by serious hobbyists who strive for authenticity in costume, weaponry and skirmish details. Pictures of Lincoln are found in countless homes and classrooms, Confederate flags adorn pick-up trucks and the words of the Gettysburg Address are as familiar as the 23rd Psalm.

As a nation, we clearly recognize the continuing importance of the War Between the States. So it is natural that we should try to find appropriate ways to keep safe the places where our great grandfathers witnessed events so noble and so horrific.

But since our country is about liberty rather than glorification of the state, we have to safeguard not just the hills and the mud on which they fought but also the freedoms for which they fought. Therefore, it would be tragic if we allow our well-meaning enthusiasm for protecting historic sites to result in programs that diminish the property rights of our fellow citizens. This bill has two important safeguards. There is a "willing seller" provision—and we need to make sure the seller's willingness is un-coerced—and there is a sunset provision on the program's funding authorization. The bill's sponsors are to be commended for including these safeguards.

ROB BISHOP.

