

NEW HAVEN REGISTER 7/9/54
Lincoln At The Fair

Amid an array of World Fair pavilions which stress ingenuity and novelty in space flights and underwater cities and the like, the State of Illinois has violated almost every rule for popularity at the Fair—and scored a shining victory.

The Illinois pavilion does not peer into the future; it looks back 100 years. It does not take visitors on an ultra-modern ride; it just seats them for a 10-minute presentation.

Yet it strikes a powerful blow for patriotism and produces a sense of American heritage which few pavilions—and particularly that of our Federal government—are able to match.

In the Illinois building the audience enters a theater and is seated before a quiet figure of Abraham Lincoln, sitting hands in lap on a throne-like setting. When the lights dim the figure rises and delivers a tape-recorded speech, complete with synchronized gestures. As far as "gimmicks" go, this is old hat. Yet it is one of the few shows at the Fair which is concluded with audience applause, and it is applause which seems more than the recognition of an imaginative presentation.

It expresses the response of an audience which has been moved away, unexpectedly, from the 21st century artificialities which are standard at the Fair and given, instead, a glimpse of unchanging American ideals expressed in historic American terms.

There is something in the audience response which is more than appreciation for a job well done. There is pride in the presentation and an obvious reaching for the values that Lincoln represents and expresses. And there is, of course, a follow-up feeling of regret that this sense of uplift is so rare at the other pavilions representing the United States.

re: Compliments to Illinois and its World Fair exhibit
from the NEW HAVEN REGISTER of New Haven Conn.

In a lead editorial in its Sept. 9th edition, the New
Haven (Conn.) Register said "Illinois has scored a
shining victory" in its presentation at the New York
World's Fair.

It said, and I quote: The State of Illinois Pavilion
strikes a powerful blow for patriotism and produces a sense
of American heritage which few other Pavilions are
able to match. It is one of the few places on the
Fairgrounds where the presentation is concluded with
the audience applauding and it is applause ..which seems
more than just appreciation for a job well done...it
gives a glimpse of unchanging American ideals expressed
in historic American terms." (end quotes)

This is but one of the many editorial tributes
paid by newspapers all over America to the presentation
of our own Illinois Pavilion, and I for one, feel
a great pride that we have been able to earn this
nationwide acclaim. It is prestige that cannot be
bought! It has to be earned and we are earning it---
at the Illinois Pavilion at the World's Fair in New York!

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