

**VA**



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# **News Release**

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**Message from Secretary Wilkie: Juneteenth, 2020**

Only when the Civil War came to an end was Union Major General Gordon Granger, upon arriving in Galveston, able to inform all that slavery ended in Texas, which became the last area of the country to fully comprehend Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Thus was affirmed Lincoln's words, from his second inaugural, just a month before his assassination, and a few months before General Granger's landing in Galveston, that the nation could move to "bind up the nation's wounds."

We know that the nation's wounds would not heal quickly and many practices of racial discrimination would continue. The national stain of slavery, Jim Crow, and their lingering vestiges, requires our ongoing vigilance and dedication to ending this scourge.

Juneteenth, that day General Granger informed Texas, serves as a reminder of the nation's history, one of the blight of slavery, and one of the possibility of changing our course through war, civil rights legislation, and changes in the hearts of men and women to fully ensure the rights our Constitution so nobly enshrines. We must continue to strive for our fellow Americans to realize that more perfect Union envisioned in our Constitution