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Booker T. Washington on Lincoln as a Role Model



“In his rise from the most abject poverty and ignorance to a position of high usefulness and power, he taught the world one of the greatest of all lessons. In fighting his own battle up from obscurity and squalor, he fought the battle of every other individual and race that is down, and so helped to pull up every other human who was down. People so often forget that by every inch that the lowest man crawls up he makes it easier for every other man to get up. Today, throughout the world, because [Lincoln](#) lived, struggled, and triumphed, every boy who is ignorant, is in poverty, is despised or

And You Think Politics are Divisive Today?



A Look Back to the Civil War

Just 150 years ago, in 1864, Abraham Lincoln was reelected president. It was a major milestone, one of the most important and critical passages in American political history.

Civil War-Lincoln historian John C. Waugh was in Gettysburg on the 4th of July to put that nation-changing event into perspective. And we were privileged to spend several days with Jack and his wife, Kathleen Lively, during the reenactment festivities.

Waugh has said of the 1864 election, “For the first time in the midst of any civil war anytime anywhere, a presidential election was conducted. It was democracy at work, proving itself despite the gunfire, a triumph of the ballot over the bullet, a fantastic first in world history. It had never happened before and wasn’t likely to happen often again.”

And in his presentation last week, Waugh said that election settled for all time what kind of nation this was going to be: a reunited Union with slavery forever abolished as Lincoln wished, or a nation, perhaps undivided, but still tainted by slavery which it likely would have been had Lincoln lost.

It was a contentious election, as both parties, Republican and Democrat, were deeply split.

Lincoln’s own party had a moderate, conservative wing (pushing to win the war and then rebuild the shattered nation with leniency and forgiveness—as Lincoln wished) and a radical Republican wing that wanted vengeance, punishment, and subjugation of the South after the war was won.

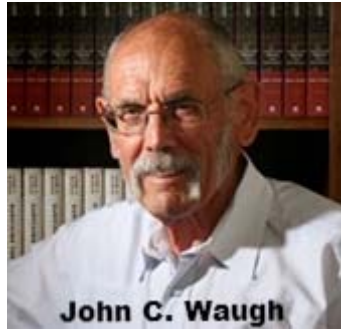
The Democrats were also divided into two wings—a war wing and a peace

discouraged, holds his head a little higher. His heart beats a little faster, his ambition to do something and be something is a little stronger, because Lincoln blazed the way.”

The entire speech is well worth your time to read and ponder. For the full text, [click here.](#)



wing. While each agreed on the need to win the war, the war Democrats wanted to restore the Union to the way it had been before the war (with slavery intact). The peace Democrats (also called copperheads) wanted a rapid end to the war and peace at any price, even if it meant letting the South go its own way.



If you want to learn about the colorful characters and the contentious issues they supported, treat yourself to the book, ***Reelecting Lincoln: The Battle for the 1864 Election.*** Jack Waugh, a great storyteller, brings the times to life, and he reminds us that great leaders are critical. Only under the leadership of a reelected Lincoln do we today have the reunited nation we all enjoy.