



A Just and Generous Nation: Abraham Lincoln and the Fight for American Opportunity

Harold Holzer, Norton Garfinkle

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In *A Just and Generous Nation*, the eminent historian Harold Holzer and the noted economist Norton Garfinkle present a groundbreaking new account of the beliefs that inspired our sixteenth president to go to war when the Southern states seceded from the Union. Rather than a commitment to eradicating slavery or a defense of the Union, they argue, Lincoln's guiding principle was the defense of equal economic opportunity.

Lincoln firmly believed that the government's primary role was to ensure that all Americans had the opportunity to better their station in life. As president, he worked tirelessly to enshrine this ideal within the federal government. He funded railroads and canals, supported education, and, most importantly, issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which opened the door for former slaves to join white Americans in striving for self-improvement. In our own age of unprecedented inequality, *A Just and Generous Nation* reestablishes Lincoln's legacy as the protector not just of personal freedom but of the American dream itself.

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