

What does the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln mean to the people of the United States?

Second Prize (High School Students) – Milena Sabelnikova, State Comprehensive School №20 (St. Petersburg)

Some time ago I found out that Abraham Lincoln had become the best President of the USA according to the social survey among 65 historians. I can say, it didn't surprise me much. This political leader made a lot for Americans and, of course, they couldn't forget it.

Lincoln's way to a summit of glory and respect wasn't easy. He was born in a typical poor family of uneducated farmers. His mother died when he was 9. So Lincoln had to help his relatives and any job was accepted by him. Future President worked as a woodcutter, a land surveyor, a boatman. Also he liked reading much.

When Lincoln started living on his own he passed exams and got permission for a lawyer's practice. Then Abraham was one of those people who founded the Republican Party. He became the President of America in 1860. And we can be sure, that event was a turning point of American history.

Let's imagine such a fact. In the 19th century a slavery problem was one of the main in the world. A slave trade was officially forbidden, but Americans went on buying slaves and bringing them to the country secretly. Slavery in the south of America and capitalism in the north of it couldn't coexist. Once Lincoln said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand". And some years later a fierce and bloody war in the USA began. It lasted during 4 years. Nearly 360 thousands of people were killed; more than 275 thousands were wounded. But the North won and after that war the conditions for quick development of industrial and agricultural production, mastering of western acres and strengthening of domestic market were created. Also Abraham Lincoln made an abolition of slavery in 1865 even though that decision was criticized much. But nobody knows what would happen if he hadn't do it.

Legacy of Lincoln for the people of the United States is great. He became a central historic figure in the awareness of American people, a person who staved off disintegration of the USA. Lincoln began a modernisation of the South, liberation of slaves. He formulated the main purpose of democracy: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." During his governing the railway to the Pacific Ocean was built, the system of infrastructure was widened, new bank system was created and the agrarian problem was desolved. After that the economy of the USA became the most developed in the world and the USA became

the world leader. Maybe Lincoln could do more but he was wounded in the theatre on the 14th of April, 1865 and next morning the President died.

The fate of Lincoln reminds me the fate of Alexander II. Our Emperor annulled serfdom, carried out military, judicial, educational reforms. He went down in Russian history as a great reformer and liberator. It's mysterious, but he was killed too. Alexander II means for Russian people as much as Abraham Lincoln means for Americans. Such politicians are really great and people are proud of them.

Lincoln is commemorated in music, poetry, and sculpture. His words are quoted by poets and politicians. His face appears on stamps, coins, and currency. Mountains, cities, highways, and schools bearing his name dot the land. Abraham Lincoln defines the civic ideal of what it means to be an American.

I'm looking at Lincoln's photo. A fixed look, a beard, a white shirt with a bow, a black jacket. Lincoln was a real man of business by appearance and a real man of his word in the life. Such people can be born one in a million. And I don't exaggerate. He said: "When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad, and that is my religion". In my opinion those words are honest like Lincoln himself.

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