

LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS

The Years of Decision

by REGINA Z. KELLY

The halls of Congress rang with fiery speeches. Neighbors quarreled and relatives were divided. In fact, the whole of the United States seemed to be racked by the question of slavery. Could this country continue part slave and part free? That was the great decision that had to be made in the years between 1854 and 1861.

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill decreed that each new state should decide whether or not it would permit slavery. The author of that bill was Stephen A. Douglas, leader of the Democratic Party. The Little Giant, as he was called, made the decision sound so easy—let the people of each state decide for themselves.

There were many who felt that decision was *too* easy. Slavery must not spread into new states, they said. And if no political party would fight against the extension of slavery, they would form a new party. In 1854, therefore, the Republican Party was born—and Abraham Lincoln emerged as its leader, crusading against slavery.

In *Lincoln and Douglas* Regina Z. Kelly tells of the dramatic part these two remarkable men played in the nation's great decision.

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REGINA Z. KELLY is Chairman of the Social Science Department and Director of Public Relations at the Austin High School in Chicago—the largest coeducational high school in the country. She is the author of several other books and about 100 feature articles and juvenile stories that have appeared in various national magazines.