

# Reconstruction

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- I. Reconstruction refers to both the political process by which the Confederate states would be readmitted to the Union and the great changes in the USA from the end of the Civil War until 1877 (reconstruction ends 1877)
  - a. Types of Reconstruction
    - i. Social = revolved around the issue of the newly freed blacks **slavery was abolished, but the newly freed Blacks had no schooling, had never had good jobs, had usually never been to cities, and were like a stranger in a foreign land**
      - 1) Disservice to Blacks b/c Americans just let them free w/o aid
    - ii. Economic = the emergence of industrial capitalism in America as a direct result of the War **should the North provide aid to the South? The South was ruined by runaway inflation and massive destruction.**
- II. Lincoln and the Radical Republicans (how were the southern states to be readmitted, and was the Reconstruction to be directed by the President or Congress?) **there were many theoretical arguments, but Reconstruction was based on reality.**
  - i. Note: Lincoln's 2nd inaugural address: "with malice toward none, with charity for all... let us strive to bind the nation's wounds"
  - a. North & South developed distinct opinions regarding secession and who lost or retained rights **North believed that secession was illegal, but they also believed that the Southern states forfeited their rights. South felt that their rights remained intact.**
  - b. Lincoln's 10% plan - set of tentative proposals for allowing Confederate states to rejoin the Union **10% plan setup in Louisiana, Tennessee, & Arkansas towards the very end of the Civil War**
    - i. *Loyalty oath* - all confederates, except high civil and military officials, would regain citizenships and their confiscated property by taking an oath of loyalty to the USA
    - ii. Recognition would be required by 10% of the voters who voted in the 1860 election, then a state government would be set up which would be recognized by the President
    - iii. Abolition of slavery **all states must agree to the Emancipation Proclamation**
    - iv. Effect: three southern states were "reconstructed" under this plan **in 1864, but this was a wartime measure designed to quicken Union victories. The radical Republicans would not accept these states to Congress, and their votes were not counted in the 1864 elections**
    - v. Radical republicans, led by Sumner and Stevens, believed that the South should be punished (they repudiated the 3 "reconstructed" governments) **Stevens was annoyed with Lincoln's mild actions and opposed his slow abolition methods during the war. Stevens seemed to have a chip on his shoulder**
      - 1) *Wade-Davis Bill* (July 1864) - harsh & punishing to south
        - a) Congress would execute the reconstruction programs (took power away from the president)
        - b) Eliminated the 10% plan --> **a majority of the population must swear allegiance (50%)**
        - c) Guarantees demands from the Southern States: abolition of slavery, disenfranchisement (no vote) of Confederate civil & military leaders, & repudiation of the Confederate debt
        - d) "Iron-Clad Oath" - past conduct was a test for political rights. Needed to be taken as a qualification for voting. Had to state that they never voluntarily supported the Confederacy
      - 2) Attack of Lincoln by the Radical Republicans: Maintained that the power of Congress must be preserved (Had Lincoln lived, it's likely that the Radicals would have diminished in power)

- 3) Lincoln's pocket veto **but he thought that the bill had some good points. Lincoln vetoed the bill because he thought it was too strict**

III. Andrew Johnson as President (1865-1868): not elected in his own right, he also lacked the respect and gratitude of the nation that Lincoln had gained **essentially not suited to hold the Presidency at this time. He never attended school.**

- a. Attitude: a devoted unionist, a southerner, and a former slave owner **cares less about the Negro than the poor Southern white. But the North was concerned about the welfare of the "freedmen"**
- b. Politics: a Democrat who believed that he was the personal and political representative of the lower classes (whites) in the South, **Johnson showed little interest in fostering industrialism. He was also vindictive and stubborn**
  - i. NOTE that congress would not reassemble until Dec. 1865
- c. Johnson's reconstruction plan (similar to Lincoln's)
  - i. Amnesty for all southerners except Confederate leaders whose wealth exceeded \$20,000 **those who would not take an oath of allegiance would not be given amnesty**
  - ii. Guarantees demanded from the South **NOTE that southern states except Texas had fulfilled these pledges to an extent before Congress convened in Dec 1865**
    - 1) Revoke ordinance of secession
    - 2) Abolish slavery
    - 3) Ratify 13th Amendment, which has been adopted by congress in 1865
    - 4) Repudiate Confederate war debts
- d. "Black Codes" were adopted by Southern state legislatures to hinder the freedom of blacks; **they angered Radical Republicans the most, Black codes were designed to ensure a regular labor supply for white southerners**
  - i. Interracial marriage banned
  - ii. Segregation in public places
  - iii. If disobedient then arrested; paid fines by working on plantation
  - iv. Could not own land
  - v. Could not serve on juries
  - vi. Could not own firearms
- e. Additional southern reaction: should the southern states "nullify" secession?
  - i. *Note:* that while the South was out of the Union, the Republican North passed several laws favoring the North, such as the Homestead Act and the Pacific Railroad Act
  - ii. Southern state conventions: elected leading Confederates to Congress **rejected Johnson's suggestion that the vote be extended to Negroes; political power remained a white monopoly**
- f. Radical reaction and response: when Congress reconvened (Dec 1865), the Radical Republicans denied admission to the "reconstructed" states **Radical opposed a quick and easy restoration of antebellum status quo**
  - i. *Politics:* power of the Republicans would be hindered by the southern "Democrats" **remembered that the 3/5 Compromise was abolished and southern congressional delegations would have more members. Southern states would not have 12 new votes**
  - ii. *Business:* Northern industrialists feared the South **would oppose protective tariffs, hard-money policies, easy credit, government subsidies, etc. These had been gained during the war**
  - iii. *Humanitarians:* **some Northern felt the Negro should be granted full political and equal rights**
  - iv. *Rivalry:* Radicals resented Johnson **and felt that they had the power over Reconstruction**
  - v. *Psychological Factors:* The South should be punished and placed on probation because they caused this great conflict! **North had a deep hatred for the South caused by the war and the assassination of Lincoln**

- vi. *Congressional action* a **Committee of Fifteen** was created to carry out **Radical Reconstruction policy**. Dominated by Stevens, its purpose was to keep Southern states out of the union and require the South to repeal Black Codes and guarantee rights for Blacks
- g. *Freedman's Bureau (1866)* vetoed by Johnson because he thought it was an **unconstitutional invasion of federal power over the states**. Johnson also called Stevens/Sumner traitors. Johnson claimed this veto was his declaration of war against the Radicals
- h. *Civil Rights Act (1866)*: declared blacks to be citizens and forbade the states to discriminate between citizens because of race or color. Passed over a presidential veto. **2/3 veto of both Houses need to override the veto**