

CHAPTER 22

Reconstruction, 1865–1877

1. Problems of Peace (pp. 477–479) In this section, the authors describe the collapsed economy and social structure of the South and the “beaten but unbent” attitude of many white southerners. List in your own words the four main questions that the authors say faced the country after the war.

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

2. The Freed Slaves (pp. 479–481) After the war, Congress established the _____ Bureau under sympathetic Gen. Oliver O. _____. (Note: He helped found a major university in Washington, D.C., that is named after him.) to provide basic services, education, and confiscated land to the newly freed but unprepared ex-slaves. (Note: This was the first attempt by the federal government to provide direct social services to the population.)
*** What do you think was the most immediate priority of black families in the South, education or land to farm? Why do you think the North would not or could not deliver on its promise of “40 acres and a mule”?

3. Johnson vs. Congress (pp. 481-489) The essential issue in the dispute after the war was whether to bind up the wounds as quickly as possible - even if that meant perpetuating much of the old southern social structure—versus those who felt that, to justify the horrors of a four-year war, the North had a responsibility to force significant change on the South—land redistribution, education, punishment for rebels, political and economic rights for freed slaves, etc. The basic problem was indecision: for two years the country started out under the easy presidential Reconstruction and then shifted abruptly to the tough version when Congress took over.

a. The authors say that President Andrew _____ was clearly not fit by ideology or temperament to lead the postwar Reconstruction. Nevertheless, he had agreed with _____ before his death that easy terms should be offered. With Congress not in session, Johnson issued a proclamation that states could be re-admitted simply by renouncing secession, repudiating Confederate debts, and ratifying the _____ Amendment outlawing slavery. Southern states, believing that they would not be occupied by a northern army, began instituting the infamous _____ Codes, which regulated the social behavior of freed blacks and essentially bound them economically to their former masters.

b. Aroused, Congress refused to seat the “whitewashed rebels” who showed up in Washington to represent the states to be re-admitted under Johnson’s plan. In March 1866, Congress passed a _____ Rights Bill over Johnson’s veto and then required that Southern states also ratify the new _____ Amendment, which granted full rights of citizenship, excluding voting, to the freedmen. Assurance of voting rights would be required later under the _____ Amendment. The Radical Republicans strengthened their position in the 1866 congressional elections and then

prepared to impose their own plan under the leadership in the Senate of Charles _____ and in the House of Thaddeus _____.

c. Read the following quotes from Lincoln and Stevens, then fill in the chart below.

Abraham Lincoln - Second Inaugural Address (March 4, 1865)

With malice toward none, with charity for all . . . let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Thaddeus Stevens

The whole fabric of Southern society must be changed. . . . The Southern states have been despotisms, not governments of the people. . . . If the South is ever to be made a safe republic, let her lands be cultivated by the toil of the owners or the free labor of intelligent citizens. This must be done even though it drives her nobility into exile. If they go, all the better.

What objectives have the highest priority for Lincoln and for Stevens and which objectives are of lesser or no priority? What is the underlying assumption of both men about why the war was fought and why so many sacrifices were made?

Lincoln

Stevens

(1) High priority:

(2) Low priority:

(3) Underlying assumption:

c. *** If you had been a northerner after the war, do you think you would have been (1) a Radical ready to use government power and money to force change in the South, or (2) would you have been in the Moderate camp, passing legal protections for the freedmen but leaving it largely up to the states to rebuild their economies and societies? Why?

4. Military Reconstruction, 1867–1877 (pp. 489–494)

a. Congress finally sent in the troops to occupy ____ (number) military districts in 18____, two years after the war ended. The purpose was largely to enfranchise blacks eventually through passage of the ____ Amendment, and to set up friendly state governments dominated by the Republican Party. This generated massive resentment on the part of white southerners. *** Do you think that military occupation would have been more acceptable in the South if it had been instituted immediately after the war? Why or why not?

b. *** What do you think of the requirement that freed slaves, kept largely illiterate by their former masters, be given immediate voting privileges?

c. After the northern troops left each state, the friendly Republican state governments were replaced by “Redeemer” governments. Who were the “Redeemers”?

d. Why were women’s rights activists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony upset by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments?

e. Be careful of the connotations of the words we use. How did southerners define the following terms and how might sympathetic northerners describe the same people?

Southerners

Northerners

(1) “Scalawags”:

(2) “Carpetbaggers”:

f. Try to summarize briefly the authors’ conclusions (pp. 491–493) about the performance of state governments under Radical Reconstruction, during which blacks exercised full political rights.

g. List two methods used by the Ku Klux Klan and others to keep blacks from voting and generally to keep them subservient.

(1)

(2)

5. **Impeachment of Johnson (pp. 494–495)** (Note: Under the Constitution, a president can be removed for nebulously-worded “high crimes and misdemeanors.” Like “bringing charges” or “indicting” a person in a criminal court, the House first has to approve “impeachment.” Then the Senate acts as a jury in a trial and must vote to “convict” before the president can be removed. Johnson was impeached but not convicted. Nixon was never formally even impeached because he resigned first. Clinton, like Johnson, was impeached by the House but not convicted.)

a. What were the charges brought against Johnson by the House? *** What do you think of those charges?

(1) Charges:

(2) Evaluation:

b. The Radicals failed to convict by only one vote. Why do the authors conclude on p. 495 that the nation “narrowly avoided a bad precedent”? *** How does this assessment apply to Clinton’s impeachment?

6. **Reflection (pp. 496–497)**

a. What do the authors mean when they say on p. 497 that the “Republicans acted from a mixture of idealism and political expediency”?

b. Note the quote from Frederick Douglass: The black man “was free from the individual master, but a slave of society.” In this respect the authors accuse the Moderates of not fully recognizing the magnitude of the task of reforming southern society. Further, they conclude that the Radical program just might have worked had it been fully implemented—land reform, etc. But this, of course, would have made the South even angrier! *** Do you have any reaction to all this? What ideas do you have about what really should have been done?

7. **Varying Viewpoints (pp. 498–499)** Early historians held the view that Reconstruction was “a kind of national disgrace” foisted on the noble South by a vindictive North. (Note: This view was graphically presented and popularized by the country’s first blockbuster movie, *Birth of a Nation*, produced in 1915 by D. W. Griffith.) How did the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s affect the way historians have interpreted the Reconstruction period?

CHAPTER 22 TERM SHEET

Reconstruction

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Christmas pardons (1868)

Pages 479–481

Conventions of Freedmen

American Missionary Association

Freedman's Bureau (1865–1872)

Gen. Oliver O. Howard

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Andrew Johnson

Lincoln's 10 Percent Reconstruction Plan (1863)

Wade-Davis Bill (50 percent, 1864)

Pocket-veto

Radical Republicans

Johnson's Reconstruction Plan (May 1865)

Thirteenth Amendment

Black Codes

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Civil Rights Bill (1866)

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1866 congressional elections

Sen. Charles Sumner

Rep. Thaddeus Stevens

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Military Reconstruction Act (1867)

Fifteenth Amendment

Ex parte Mulligan (1866)

“Radical” regimes

“Redeemers”

Union League

Hiram Revels/Blanche Bruce

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“Carpetbaggers”

Ku Klux Klan

Force Acts (1870–1871)

Disfranchisement

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Tenure of Office Act (1867)

Edwin M. Stanton

Rep. Benjamin F. Butler

Johnson impeachment

Sen. Ben Wade

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Alaska purchase (1867)

“Seward’s Folly”

