

## Chapter 17 Reconstruction (1865–1877)

After the Civil War, the United States began Reconstruction, the process of rebuilding the South and reuniting the nation. Many northerners tried to protect the rights of African Americans, but many white southerners opposed these efforts. After Reconstruction, the South experienced economic and social changes. As you study this chapter, consider how a nation might attempt to rebuild itself following a civil war, why a nation's definition of a democratic society might change over time, and how the experiences of a newly freed group might affect a nation.

## Chapter 17

### Section 1: Rebuilding the South

In this section you will learn that following the Civil War, the United States began the process of reuniting the nation and assisting freed slaves. As you study this material, pay attention to the following terms:

Reconstruction

amnesty

Ten Percent Plan

Wade-Davis Bill

Thirteenth Amendment

Freedmen's Bureau

You will also want to keep the following questions in mind as you review this material:

- What effect did the end of the Civil War have on southern life?
- How did Lincoln, Congress, and Johnson differ in their views on Reconstruction?
- In what ways did the Freedmen's Bureau aid newly freed slaves?

## Chapter 17.1 Section Summary

After the South's surrender, many southerners returned to find their homes ruined and their relatives dead. Railroads and bridges were also destroyed, making travel difficult. Nevertheless, former slaves moved around, rejoining their families, starting new communities and churches, and seeking their own farmland.

Soon the U.S. government began **Reconstruction**—the process of reuniting the nation and rebuilding the southern states without slavery. This process began in 1865, when President Lincoln began applying his plan for Reconstruction. He wanted to offer **amnesty**—or a pardon for illegal acts—to southerners who had supported the war if they promised loyalty to the United States and accepted a ban on slavery. Lincoln also proposed that if 10 percent of a state's voters made this loyalty pledge, then he would allow that state to rejoin the Union. This became known as the **Ten Percent Plan**.

Many Republican members of Congress disagreed with Lincoln's plan. They presented a different plan called the **Wade-Davis Bill**. Under this bill, southern states would have to ban slavery, and a majority of the state's white males would have to pledge their loyalty

to the Union. President Lincoln would not sign this bill into law because few southerners could fulfill its requirements.

In 1865 the states ratified the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which made slavery illegal in the United States. In 1865 Congress also set up the **Freedmen's Bureau** to help poor people in the South, black and white. The bureau provided food and shelter to the poor, offered legal help, and set up hospitals and schools.

In April 1865, President Lincoln was assassinated. Andrew Johnson became the next president, and made his own plan for Reconstruction. Johnson gave amnesty to all southerners who pledged loyalty to the Union and promised to support the abolition of slavery. He also gave amnesty to almost 7,000 wealthy southerners and ex-Confederate officials, which shocked Republicans. In addition, Johnson set up rules for establishing new state governments in the South. By the end of 1865, all southern states except Texas had created new state governments.

## Chapter 17

### Section 2: The Fight Over Reconstruction

In this section you will learn that as debate heated up over Reconstruction, the North and the South used different methods to protect or restrict the rights of African Americans. As you study this material, pay attention to the following terms:

Black Codes

Radical Republicans

Civil Rights Act of 1866

Fourteenth Amendment

Reconstruction Acts

Fifteenth Amendment

You will also want to keep the following questions in mind as you review this material:

- How did Black Codes restrict African Americans' freedoms?
- Why did Radical Republicans try to impeach President Johnson?
- How did Republicans try to protect the civil rights of African Americans?

## Chapter 17.2 Section Summary

During Reconstruction, the southern states passed **Black Codes**, which restricted African Americans' freedom. These codes forced African Americans to work on farms or as servants, and prevented them from owning guns, holding public meetings, or renting property in cities.

The codes angered many Republicans, who thought African Americans should have rights as citizens. A group known in Congress as the **Radical Republicans** also wanted the federal government to be more involved in Reconstruction. President Johnson disagreed with Congress over how much assistance to give to African Americans. To overcome Johnson's reluctance, the Republicans proposed the **Civil Rights Act of 1866**. This gave African Americans the same legal rights as whites. Although Johnson vetoed it, Congress overrode his veto and passed the act.

To protect the new civil rights laws, Congress passed the **Fourteenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This gave African Americans and all naturalized U.S. citizens equal protection under the law. It also banned many former Confederate officials from holding public office.

Johnson opposed the Fourteenth Amendment, which was a major issue in the congressional election campaign in 1866. In this same year, riots targeting African Americans erupted in Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana. Local police participated in this violence, which left many African Americans dead. Johnson's opposition to improving life for African Americans caused many voters to stop supporting him.

In 1867 Congress passed the first of several **Reconstruction Acts**. These acts required each southern state to support the Fourteenth Amendment and give African Americans the right to vote before that state could rejoin the Union.

Congress knew that Johnson did not support its policies, and passed laws to restrict his power. When Johnson disobeyed one of these laws, the House of Representatives impeached him, accusing him of wrongdoing. The Senate then voted, and Johnson escaped impeachment by just one vote.

Seven southern states rejoined the Union in 1868. In that year, Ulysses S. Grant beat Johnson in the presidential race. In 1869 Congress proposed the **Fifteenth Amendment**, which gave African American men throughout the United States the right to vote. The states ratified the amendment in 1870.

## Chapter 17

### Section 3: Reconstruction in the South

In this section you will learn that as the South slowly rebuilt, African Americans continued to be denied their civil rights. As you study this material, pay attention to the following terms:

carpetbaggers

scalawags

Ku Klux Klan

Panic of 1873

Civil Rights Act of 1875

General Amnesty Act of 1872

Compromise of 1877

Redeemers

poll tax

segregation

Jim Crow laws

*Plessy v. Ferguson*

You will also want to keep the following questions in mind as you review this material:



- What roles did African Americans, northerners, and southern white Republicans play in rebuilding the South?
- How did the Ku Klux Klan try to stop Reconstruction?
- What factors led to the end of Reconstruction?

### Chapter 17.3 Section Summary

Republicans controlled most southern governments during Reconstruction. However, they were unpopular with white southerners. Northern-born Republicans who came south were often called **carpetbaggers**. Southern Republicans were often called **scalawags**. Democrats resented the political power held by southern Republicans, who supported Reconstruction. Many African Americans also became involved in politics. They served in state legislatures and helped to enforce civil rights laws. Sixteen African Americans were elected to the U.S. Congress.

Most white southerners opposed Reconstruction and did not want African Americans to have civil rights. In 1866 some whites formed the **Ku Klux Klan**, a group that used violence to scare African Americans and stop civil rights reforms.

Economic problems during the **Panic of 1873** weakened Republican control. Still, Republicans in Congress passed the **Civil Rights Act of 1875**. This law allowed African Americans to sue private businesses for discrimination. Congress also passed the **General Amnesty Act of 1872**, which allowed some former Confederates to hold public office.

The presidential election of 1876 was so close that it was hard to determine who won. Congress and the Supreme Court settled the election by giving Republican Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency. In return, Republicans agreed to remove all federal troops from the South. This became known as the **Compromise of 1877**. The removal of federal troops from the South marked the end of Reconstruction.

By the time Reconstruction ended, Democrats controlled almost every state government in the South. The leaders of the Democratic Party were known as the **Redeemers**. They limited the rights of African Americans by starting a **poll tax**, which required voters to pay a special tax before they could vote. This tax kept many African Americans from voting.

Southern Democrats also introduced **segregation**, which is the forced separation of African Americans and whites in public places. **Jim Crow laws** were passed to enforce segregation. In 1896 the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that segregation was legal, as long as public facilities were of equal quality.

## Chapter 17

### Section 4: The New South

In this section you will learn that after Reconstruction, a new system of farming developed, and southern leaders began to introduce industry in the South. As you study this material, pay attention to the following terms:

sharecropping

spiritual

You will also want to keep the following questions in mind as you review this material:

- What problems did some southern farmers face at the end of the Civil War?
- Why did some business leaders hope to create a “New South”?
- What were some popular forms of southern culture during and after Reconstruction?

## Chapter 17.4 Section Summary

After Reconstruction, few African Americans could buy their own farms. Most worked for wages or participated in **sharecropping**. Under this system, landowners provided land and tools, while sharecroppers provided the labor. Sharecroppers then had to give most of their crop to the landowner.

Sharecroppers often got into debt after buying items on credit or when they had a bad crop. Although cotton seemed to be a safe crop to grow, in some years farmers produced too much cotton, and so the prices dropped. Many landowners also cheated the sharecroppers, who fell deeper and deeper into debt.

Some leaders wanted to create a “New South” with an industrial as well as an agricultural base. The most successful new industry in the South was textile manufacturing. Textile mills were built to process the huge cotton crops. People were attracted to mill work because it offered an alternative to farming. However, wages were low and mill conditions were unhealthy. As new industries developed in the South, workers built new railroads, allowing companies to ship goods faster. New telegraph lines helped people to communicate better.

Some southerners wrote novels and stories that reflected the South's unique cultural traditions. Writers used their work to preserve folk tales or to protest racial prejudice in the South. Writers such as Mark Twain and Joel Chandler Harris were very popular.

Southern music also grew in popularity after the Civil War. The **spiritual**, a type of song combining Christian hymns and African music, became an important part of southern music. From 1871 to 1872 a group of African American singers from Fisk University traveled around the United States and Europe. These singers performed spirituals, helping to make southern music popular around the world.