Reconstruction
(1865-1876)

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Key Questions

1. How do we bring the South back into the Union?

2. How do we rebuild the South after its destruction during the war?

3. How do we integrate and protect newly-emancipated black freedmen?

4. What branch of government should control the process of Reconstruction?
Wartime Reconstruction
President Lincoln’s Plan

★ 10% Plan

* Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction (December 8, 1863)

* Replace majority rule with “loyal rule” in the South.

* He didn’t consult Congress regarding Reconstruction.

* Pardon to all but the highest ranking military and civilian Confederate officers.

* When 10% of the voting population in the 1860 election had taken an oath of loyalty and established a government, it would be recognized.
President Lincoln’s Plan

★ 1864 → “Lincoln Governments” formed in LA, TN, AR

* “loyal assemblies”
* They were weak and dependent on the Northern army for their survival.
Wade-Davis Bill (1864)

- Required 50% of the number of 1860 voters to take an “iron clad” oath of allegiance (swearing they had never voluntarily aided the rebellion).
- Required a state constitutional convention before the election of state officials.
- Enacted specific safeguards of freedmen’s liberties.

Senator Benjamin Wade (R-OH)

Congressman Henry W. Davis (R-MD)
Wade-Davis Bill (1864)

- “Iron-Clad” Oath.
- “State Suicide” Theory [MA Senator Charles Sumner]
- “Conquered Provinces” Position [PA Congressman Thaddeus Stevens]
13th Amendment

★ Ratified in December, 1865.

★ Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

★ Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.
Presidential Reconstruction
President Andrew Johnson

- Jacksonian Democrat.
- Anti-Aristocrat.
- White Supremacist.
- Agreed with Lincoln that states had never legally left the Union.

Damn the negroes! I am fighting these traitorous aristocrats, their masters!
President Johnson’s Plan (10%+)

- Offered amnesty upon simple oath to all except Confederate civil and military officers and those with property over $20,000 (they could apply directly to Johnson).

- In new constitutions, they must accept minimum conditions repudiating slavery, secession and state debts.

- Named provisional governors in Confederate states and called them to oversee elections for constitutional conventions.

**EFFECTS?**

1. Disenfranchised certain leading Confederates.
2. Pardoned planter aristocrats brought them back to political power to control state organizations.
3. Republicans were outraged that planter elite were back in power in the South!
Growing Northern Alarm!

- Many Southern state constitutions fell short of minimum requirements.
- Johnson granted 13,500 special pardons.
- Revival of southern defiance.

BLACK CODES
Slavery is Dead?
Black Codes

★ Purpose:
* Guarantee stable labor supply now that blacks were emancipated.
* Restore pre-emancipation system of race relations.

★ Forced many blacks to become sharecroppers [tenant farmers].
Congress Breaks with the President

- Congress bars Southern Congressional delegates.
- Joint Committee on Reconstruction created.
- February, 1866 → President vetoed the Freedmen’s Bureau bill.
- March, 1866 → Johnson vetoed the 1866 Civil Rights Act.
- Congress passed both bills over Johnson’s vetoes → 1st in U. S. history!!
If my blood is to be shed because I vindicate the Union and the preservation of this government in its original purity and character, let it be shed; let an altar to the Union be erected, and then, if it is necessary, take me and lay me upon it, and the blood that now warms and animates my existence shall be poured out as a fit libation to the Union.

(February 1866)
Freedmen’s Bureau (1865)

- Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.
- Many former northern abolitionists risked their lives to help southern freedmen.
- Called “carpetbaggers” by white southern Democrats.
Freedmen’s Bureau Seen Through Southern Eyes

Plenty to eat and nothing to do.
Freedmen’s Bureau School
Radical (Congressional) Reconstruction
14th Amendment

★ Ratified in July, 1868.
  * Provide a constitutional guarantee of the rights and security of freed people.
  * Insure against neo-Confederate political power.
  * Enshrine the national debt while repudiating that of the Confederacy.

★ Southern states would be punished for denying the right to vote to black citizens!
The Balance of Power in Congress

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The 1866 Bi-Election

★ A referendum on Radical Reconstruction.
★ Johnson made an ill-conceived propaganda tour around the country to push his plan.
★ Republicans won a 3-1 majority in both houses and gained control of every northern state.

Johnson’s “Swing around the Circle”
Radical Plan for Readmission

- Civil authorities in the territories were subject to military supervision.
- Required new state constitutions, including black suffrage and ratification of the 13th and 14th Amendments.
- In March, 1867, Congress passed an act that authorized the military to enroll eligible black voters and begin the process of constitution making.
Reconstruction Acts of 1867

★ Military Reconstruction Act
* Restart Reconstruction in the 10 Southern states that refused to ratify the 14th Amendment.
* Divide the 10 “unreconstructed states” into 5 military districts.
Reconstruction Acts of 1867

★ Command of the Army Act

* The President must issue all Reconstruction orders through the commander of the military.

★ Tenure of Office Act

* The President could not remove any officials [esp. Cabinet members] without the Senate’s consent, if the position originally required Senate approval.

- Designed to protect radical members of Lincoln’s government.
- A question of the constitutionality of this law.
President Johnson’s Impeachment

- Johnson removed Stanton in February, 1868.
- Johnson replaced generals in the field who were more sympathetic to Radical Reconstruction.
- The House impeached him on February 24 before even drawing up the charges by a vote of 126 - 47!
The Senate Trial

- 11 week trial.
- Johnson acquitted 35 to 19 (one short of required 2/3s vote).