

Re: Presidential Reconstruction

II. Lincoln's Reconstruction Plan(s)

A. Lincoln as Complete Politician

The idea that Lincoln had a reconstruction plan is one of the many myths of Reconstruction. Instead it is truer to say that Lincoln was ready to try any solution or experiment providing it would give him the desired results.

Lincoln's plans were characterized by a strain of charity and mercy. They were also highly political in design. He did want the South to return to the Union as quickly and painlessly as possible, but he was determined that the Republican party would emerge from the war as the supreme political force in the nation.

B. Louisiana Plan--the 10% plan. (Use Oates, "Toward a New Birth of Freedom")

The plan was voluntaristic and noncoercive. Based on 10% of the 1860 electorate. All that was necessary to reestablish a state government was for at least 10% of the eligible voters to swear an oath of loyalty to the Union and the Constitution and that the new state constitution incorporate the emancipation proclamation or provisions to end slavery.

The 10% plan can best be understood as provisional--as a war measure--geared to bring the seceded states back into the Union fold with a minimal amount of complications.

Key: Lincoln's pardoning policies: Those exempted from taking the oath--former officers of the Confederacy holding civilian and diplomatic posts, all who served as Rebel officers w/.general ranks and all who had resigned their commissions from the Federal armed forces and joined the Confederacy. In short Lincoln was determined to prevent the reemergence of the former leaders of the slavocracy in the South. He had eradicated slavery and now he was determined to uproot the old southern ruling class.

History 217

Re: Presidential Reconstruction

Lincoln's plan (p. 2)

Lincoln's plans for blacks. He suggested to the powers in Louisiana that qualified blacks and those who served in the Union army be extended the vote, etc. The reconstructed Louisiana Constitution did not include this provision. Lincoln took heat from the Radicals in Congress because blacks were not enfranchised. Have to remember that the 10% plan was a war-time measure. It was a provisional measure that Lincoln felt was appropriate for the time. Was he wedded to this plan? Oates makes it clear that he was not.

Oates is pretty clear on this. Lincoln was evolving to a more comprehensive Reconstruction plan that would include full political rights to the newly freed blacks in the South.

C. Had Lincoln Lived

Some assumptions we can make:

1. Lincoln's relations with his Party. That Reconstruction would have been a joint undertaking between the President and the Congress. Relations that developed under Andrew Johnson w/ Congress impossible to imagine under Lincoln.

Account for the Wade-Davis Bill. . . .

Lincoln the politician. Lincoln the political "insider."
Lincoln the party man. Everything he attained in national politics he owed to the Republican party. He would never have thrown that away. And as Oates points out that Lincoln was very close to the views of the influential members of the Republican party in Congress.

2. Lincoln's determination to see a new South restructured. He was dead opposed to any reemergence of the old southern ruling class. He wanted to see the South restructured politically assuring that Southern Unionists and blacks received their full political rights in the new postwar governments. He would have used federal force in the South to assure this development.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

"Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!' If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein and departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope--ferverently do we pray--that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.'"

Justice to
 "Holy Concord"
 respect of Union Cause
 Force/Threat were the
 instrumental instrument of
 the Holy Power.

Would not know
 any the Victory

3. What did the North expect from this commitment? There was a loose consensus among the northerners that the war bring certain requirements. certain compensating symbols of assurance from the defeated South. Symbols of the Union victory:

a). That the South show some repentance--the North did not ask for "blood" sacrifices. . . . But there was a feeling that the southern war leaders be ostracized from office for a time and prevented from participating in political affairs.

b). Southern Unionists should be rewarded ~~for~~ for their loyalty to the Union. . . .

c). That the southern Negroes be accorded full protection in their newly conferred freedom. Northerners were aware of the Negroes role in the Union victory: Some 180, 000 blacks fought in the Union Army. 36,000 were killed. . . .wounded and missing at the wars end. In total they participated in 449 battles in the war. . . .

Draw the analogy between the German and Japanese surrenders and the South's surrender.