

Outline

I. Building toward the 13th Amendment

II. Force on the Issues

III. Lincoln, Congress, and Reconstruction

History 225

Re: Notes w/ Reconstruction: Setting of the Problem

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1. Building Toward the 13th Amendment

A. Slavery died throughout the war in many ways.

By Union armies enforcing the Emancipation Proclamation with each day of advance into the Confederacy after January 1, 1863.

With slaves voting against slavery as they moved into the ranks of the Union army. This involved about 25% of the slave population.

By former Confederate states like the break-away West Virginia, Louisiana and Arkansas that drafted new constitutions banning the institution.

A permanent stake into the heart of chattel slavery came with the adoption of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. This was the first amendment added to the Constitution since 1804!!!! Importance here is that the 13th Amendment was not a temporary war measure but became the permanent law of the land.

B. Congressional odyssey of the amendment

The first effort to get the two houses of Congress to come up with the requisite 2/3s came in June 1864. It was foiled when 66 Democrats blocked the measure in the House after it had passed in the Senate. [93 Rep. House members voted "Yea."

1864 election returning Lincoln to the WH also gave Republicans a large majority in the House. This plus Lincoln's public rhetoric and behind-the-scenes lobbying and horse trading with receptive Democrats made passage of the amendment possible. It passed on January 31, 1865.

*every
and
Lincoln's*

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Re: Review of Foner, Chpts 1-3

Page: Follows after notes on 13th Amendment

Throw out to Class:

After passage of the 13th Amendment was all well? Or was the scene one of rampant confusion, disagreement, and an absence of coherent policies about what reconstruction should look like after the war?

What does Foner say about the condition of freedmen under military govts. in the South. Louisiana is a good test case.

Banks and the oxymoron of compulsory free labor arrangements.

Was this a concerted policy of transition from bondage to prepare blacks to control their own labor and ultimately contract out for themselves their labor? Or was it a policy to win over to the Union the former planters with a sweetheart deal that was essentially little different from slavery.

Were the Port Royal, Davis Bend, and in the East Sherman's Field Order 15 a model for the future? Or were they simply wartime expedients put in place to deal with the immediate problem of mobilizing large numbers of former slaves to keep them tied to the land in the South and prevent idle hands from causing trouble?

Should individual blacks be viewed now as ready to enter the race for life by setting them loose to compete in the free market with whites or did their unique historical experience (250 years of unrewarded labor) oblige the federal govt. to initiate some form of affirmative action to compensate them for their labor before setting them loose into the world of root hog or die; make it on your own or don't make it at all?

Views divided between the laissez faire or interventionist approaches during the last days of the war.

What does Foner tell us about the expectations or the meaning of freedom among the newly freed slaves? How did they act out and test their new status?

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Re: Notes w/ Recon: Setting of the Problem

Page 3 Addendum to Had Lincoln lived

QUESTION; HAD LINCOLN LIVED WOULD HE HAVE CLASHED W/ PARTY OVER POSTWAR POLICY ON THE SOUTH?

Strong indications that that would not have happened.

1. Lincoln sends out signals.

Removes the two most conservative members of his Cabinet in M. Blair and Bates.

He appoints Salmon Chase (the most egalitarian member of Cabinet) to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court/

He tasks Secretary of War Stanton to set up military governments in the former Confederate states. Stanton was an outspoken proponent of expanding suffrage to blacks.

2. Lincoln moves as the war winds to an end. Victory was in the air in the spring of 1865. Savannah fell in December 1864; that following January Sherman took Columbia (SC) and then Charleston; Richmond fell in March 1865. Lincoln's visit to Richmond.

3. With the war virtually over it was clear to Lincoln that the wartime 10% plan was no longer viable. You could not reconstruct a stable government on support of only 1/10 of the population. It was equally clear that Congress had the right to sit on the credentials of members to the House and Senate. Congress had already refused to sit the Louisiana delegates sent north.

With the war nearly over there was now room for compromise and fence building between the executive and the legislature.

4. Lincoln's last words on the subject came on April 11th. The occasion was a serenade outside the White House and Lincoln took the opportunity to address the nation. He announced that "bad promises are better broken than kept." That the La. Plan was not set in concrete and only established general guidelines for the future. That it was not the only acceptable plan. He was open to any alternatives generated by the Congress.

At the end Lincoln was moving closer to Congress, not away, closer to expanded rights for blacks and for greater protection of these rights under law.

Having worked to save the Union (a more Perfect Union) he was prepared to advance the ideals that underwrote this republic-- ideals that applied equally to whites as well as blacks--to the proposition that all men are created equal. This is what he had said a year and one half ago at Gettysburg.

*Lincoln as
abolitionist*

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Re: Notes w/ Reconstruction: Setting of the Problem

Page: addendum to "Had Lincoln Lived"

III. Lincoln, Congress, and Reconstruction

President and Congress had (if not clashed) had taken positions on Reconstruction while the war was raging that were apparently in conflict.

Review Lincoln and the Louisiana Experiment in 1864. Lincoln's Ten Percent plan was launched w/ Louisiana. It was a wartime measure on Lincoln's part to bring La. back into the Union. Lincoln hoping that other Confederate states could be seduced to follow the Bayou state's example. Also to get more Republican votes in the 1864 election returning Lincoln to the White House to finish the work of ending the war and adding congressional votes for an amendment ending slavery. In every sense Lincoln was focused on the short term military and political benefits of bringing La. back into the Union.

It would be fair to say that Lincoln had no "master plan" for a postwar reconstruction policy in the South. He was feeling his way.

Congress' responded w/ the Wade-Davis bill in July 1864.

[ask class] about the requirements of the plan. Note: that the Wade-Davis bill said nothing about enfranchisement for blacks.

But it was a ringing statement from the legislative branch that a possible war between the executive and legislative branches was in the offing. Note too that an overwhelming majority of Republicans in both houses favored the Wade-Davis provisions for the postwar South as opposed to Lincoln's 10% plan.

A small but powerful minority of Republicans were of the opinion that Lincoln was too weak and soft-hearted to carry out the reconstruction of the former Confederacy after the war was over. (We have introduced this w/ Chase's behind-the-scenes bid for the party's nomination in 1864. While these extremists or Radicals were a minority in the party, they supported suffrage and compensation for the former bondsman. Neither of these positions were presented in the Wade-Davis bill.

*** Addendum here; Notes on Louisiana free blacks who bring the issue of black suffrage front and center. (See Foner)