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Re: Addendum Notes to Radical Reconstruction

Moderate Republican profile:

Generally moderates came from other sections of the North than the New England area (seed bed of abolitionism). States like Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. They hoped that reconstruction could be settled quickly and that the nation could get about the business of dealing with pressing economic concerns. They were not in favor of imposing open ended social revolution on the South. Nor did they favor a break with Johnson. They did not favor black suffrage. They did not favor any confiscation schemes that would take land away from the former planter class and distribute it to poor blacks and loyalist poor whites. Their hope was that moderate policy would win the support of the "natural leaders" of the South who would form the core of a new Republican party and in time would--state by state--introduce black suffrage when the time was right, etc.

But they did believe that modification of Johnson's govts. was essential. They were anxious about Johnson's talk about a political realignment in the nation. And they did support the Radicals' determination to see that the former slaves enjoyed their full civil rights in the post-war South. The black codes and the efforts of the Johnson govts. to repress the freedmen was anathema to moderates as it was to Radicals.

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re: Addendum to Radical Reconstruction

Johnson's Ringing Vetoes:

Johnson's Veto: Argued that the FB was a government "give-away" program and was "unconstitutional" and unaffordable. Congress, he went on, had never seen fit to provide economic relief, establish schools, or purchase land for "our own people." (interesting racial subtext here). . . . Furthermore could not be countenanced as long as some states were denied representation in the Union.

Civil Rights bill(1866): The CR bill in Constitutional terms represented the first attempt to give meaning to the 13th Amendment(see section # 2 of the 13th). To define in legislative terms the meaning of freedom. In the mind of Trumbull and the Republicans were the egregious assaults on black freedom embodied in the Black Codes. The CR bill contained nothing about black suffrage.

But these protections were the irreducible minimum for the majority of the Republican party. They expected that Johnson would sign it.

Johnson's veto message of the CR bill was headon and calculated to divide the Republican party.

He rejected the entire principle of federal protection of blacks' civil rights and the broad conception of national power that lay behind it. The idea of the national govt. newly asserted power in the internal affairs of the several states was revolutionary for that time. But what was most startling about the veto message was its blatant racism. The President had convinced himself that clothing the blacks with the privileges of citizenship discriminated against the white race. . . and that the bill operated in favor of the blacks against the interests of the white race. He also made the astonishing suggestion in the message that immigrants from abroad were more deserving of citizenship than blacks because they knew more about "the nature and character of our institutions . He also called up the specter of racial intermarriage as the logical consequence of Congressional policy.

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It was clear that Johnson was playing the race card with his eye on stirring up racial antagonism and placing himself as the champion of the Great White race (by promising to "keep the black man down") in order to build up support in the white South and among Northern Democrats and avid racists in the North as part of his political realignment scheme.

He simply miscalculated. He expected that most of the moderates in the Republican party would ultimately shift over to him leaving the opposition Republicans made up of a rump faction of Radicals.

Congress, for the first time in American political history passed the CR bill over a president's veto.