

# Causes of the Civil War

## Early History of Slavery

Slaves were first introduced into Virginia in 1619 - a period when the slave trade and ownership of slaves was legal under the law. New England seamen had found a profitable venture in the transportation and sale of Africans and urged all the Colonies to take advantage of this source of labor. The people in the North quickly got involved in the slave trade while the people in the South initially rejected it. Between 1619 and the Declaration of Independence in 1776, petition after petition was presented to the British crown to stop the slave trade. Numerous Acts of Assembly were passed in Virginia to stop the slave trade only to be vetoed by the King. Before long the people of the North found that their climate and manufacturing economy was not well adapted to slave labor and the South was beginning to learn the advantages of slave labor in an agricultural economy. At the birth of our nation, slavery existed in practically all states. As late as 1787 when the Constitution was framed, the South demanded an end to the slave trade. They were opposed by the New England slave-traders and a compromise was reached that would restrict the slave trade until 1800 when it would be prohibited. The prohibition was later extended to 1808 when importation of slaves was finally ended. History is clear on the facts that the South was not responsible for the initiation of the slave trade or importation of slaves and strenuously objected to it as late as the birth of our nation.



## The Constitution

When we declared our independence, our forefathers recognized that the size and the variety of climate and production of the new nation made it almost impossible for one central government to meet all the needs of its people. In their wisdom, they recognized that each state could best handle its own unique interests and a central government should take charge of only those interests which were common to all the states. Therefore, when the Continental Congress formulated the Articles of Confederation in November 1777, they were submitted to

## Causes of the Civil War

the legislatures of the respective States, rather than to the people, for ratification. The articles constituted by their very terms a compact between States and not the people as a whole and declare that each State retains its sovereignty and every power that is not expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled. While numerous powers were vested in the Federal Congress, yet it had no power, except acting on and through the States as such, even to collect taxes or to enlist troops for the prosecution of the war of the Revolution. When our independence from Great Britain was secured, the treaty of peace recognized each of the separate Commonwealths as free, sovereign and independent states rather than the people as a whole.

In 1787 the Constitutional Convention assembled at Philadelphia to prepare and propose to the several states a new constitution. Even at the beginning there were two powerful forces at work. One group led by Hamilton supported a monarchy or strong central government. Jefferson, the great apostle of democracy, led the other group. It became obvious that the only way to protect the rights of the minority against the encroachments of the majority was to limit the powers of the central government. To insure the state and federal governments were limited to their own interests, a list of specific powers granted to the central government were spelled out in the Constitution and the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment was added to the Constitution. This Amendment states "**The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.**"

Just as with the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution was not an act of the people but it was submitted to the states for ratification. Ratification by nine states was required for the Constitution to become effective. Each state was treated as a separate sovereignty and only by acceptance of its terms, would it become binding upon that state. The states were free to enter the Union or to retain their complete independence. The Federal Government then was a compact between states with narrowly defined and delegated powers from its member states.

It was only a short time later when the rights of the states under the new Constitution were tested. In February 1790 two abolition

## Causes of the Civil War

petitions were presented to Congress. That body **"resolved that Congress had no authority to interfere in the emancipation of slaves, or even the treatment of them within any of the States, it remaining with the several States alone to provide any regulations therein which humanity or true policy may require."** Congress had clearly declared its view of its power over the subject and provided assurance to the states that Congress would not exercise any unconstitutional authority. Some Southern Congressmen had made it clear that without the guaranty of their rights of property in slaves, the states they represented would have never ratified the Constitution and the plan for the Union would have failed.

This incident shows how early the South learned to look to the Constitution for the defense of their rights in regard to slavery and how Congress clearly admitted the existence of these defenses. The South's property rights in slaves were guaranteed by the Constitution.

### **Early Power Struggles**

Before the new government was 20 years old, the power struggles began. The Federalist-controlled Congress passed the Alien and Sedition acts in 1798. European immigrants generally supported the Republicans and the Naturalization Act postponed citizenship and voting privileges for 14 rather than 5 years for immigrants. The Alien and Alien Enemies Acts empowered the President to imprison or deport aliens posing a threat to the government. The Sedition Act criminalized written or spoken criticism of the government, the Congress, or the President and virtually nullified the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment. All four laws were designed to strengthen the Federalists and weaken the Republicans. Kentucky and Virginia quickly responded with resolutions declaring that the federal government had no right under the Constitution to assume these powers and they were therefore null and void. They further declared that it was the right of the states and not the federal government to determine the constitutionality of such acts. The unpopularity of these acts was largely responsible for Thomas Jefferson, a Republican, being elected President in 1800.

The next battle was over the balance between slave and free states. Population determined representation in the House of Representatives where the northern states held a distinct advantage. To

## Causes of the Civil War

counterbalance this advantage, representation in the Senate was based on two Senators per state. If the free states gained a majority in the Senate, they could control the federal government. When Alabama was admitted as a state in 1819, the number of slave and free states were equal, as was representation in the Senate. The problem arose as to the slave or free status of the vast territories in the West and Southwest acquired through the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican War. The slave states asserted their rights to settle these territories with their slave property - a right that the free states denied. At the same time, Missouri was trying to gain admission as a slave state. After two years of controversy, a solution was worked out in the Missouri Compromise. The compromise admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state to maintain the balance in the Senate. It also provided that slavery would be excluded from the unorganized part of the Louisiana Territory and with the exception of Missouri, slavery would not be allowed north of a line at 36 degrees 30' latitude.

### **The Tariff of Abominations**

A tariff was about the only way the new federal government had to raise funds for roads, canals and other improvements. In an effort to protect northern manufacturing interests, the federal government levied a high protective tariff on imported manufactured goods in 1828. The impact of the tariff fell mainly on the Southern states that were the main purchasers of imported manufactured goods. This tariff soon became known as the Tariff of Abominations in the south and the tariff was viewed as benefitting the North at the expense of the South as well as an unconstitutional expansion of the powers of the federal government. John C. Calhoun of South Carolina and other Southerners argued that if Congress enacted legislation that went beyond the powers granted in the Constitution, then the states could declare such legislation null and void - the same arguments used in the 1798 Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions. In response, Congress slightly lowered the tariff in 1832 but it did little to satisfy Southerners. On November 24, 1832, South Carolina passed an Ordinance of Nullification declaring the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 null and void and forbidding the collection of the tariffs in the state. Responding to the challenge, President Andrew Jackson had a force bill introduced in the U. S. Senate to give him the authority to use armed forces if necessary to enforce the tariff law. With the nation on

## Causes of the Civil War

the brink of war, Henry Clay and others drafted a compromise tariff bill that the South could accept. The compromise tariff was passed in 1833 and South Carolina rescinded its Ordinance of Nullification.

### **The Question of Secession**

The question of whether a state could secede from the Union initially came up long before the Civil War at the Hartford Convention. In 1814 representatives of six New England states assembled in Hartford, Connecticut in opposition to the War of 1812 with England. They declared that unless the policy of the administration in prosecuting the war was changed, they would withdraw from the Union. The war ended before they had an opportunity to act on their threat. In 1839, Massachusetts resolved to secede from the Union over their objection to the annexation of Louisiana. Three years later in 1842 Massachusetts petitioned Congress to secede and again in 1845 they passed another secession resolution. These events clearly demonstrate that the people of New England recognized the right of a state to secede from the Union.

### **Fugitive Slave Laws of 1793 and 1850**

The Constitution contained a provision that stated:

**"No person held to service or labor in one State under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."**

The ambiguity of this clause made it almost unenforceable so the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 was passed. It authorized slave owners or their agents to apprehend fugitives in any state or territory and they could apply to a circuit or district judge for a certificate to take custody of runaways. The law did not grant judges the power to issue warrants of arrest, nor did it require federal marshals to assist owners. These shortcomings irritated slave-owners.

In 1841, anti-slavery conventions were held in Ohio, Massachusetts, and New York. Participants pledged their sacred honor that no colored man would be returned from these states. They pledged their honor to violate the Constitution and commit treason against the laws

## Causes of the Civil War

of their country. It became almost impossible to reclaim a fugitive slave from the free states. Daniel Webster argued that it was absurd for some parties in a compact to disregard one part and expect the other parties to comply with the rest. He said, "**that if the Northern States refuse, willfully and deliberately, to carry into effect that part of the Constitution which respects the restoration of fugitive slaves, and Congress provides no remedy, the South would no longer be bound to observe the compact. A bargain cannot be broken on one side and still bind the other side.**"

In an attempt to lay the issue to rest, Congress enacted a Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 that created commissioners under federal court appointment to adjudicate fugitive cases. They had active roles in ensuring retrieval of escaped slaves. Federal marshals also were enjoined to help recapture slaves, under \$1000 penal fines for dereliction. If a runaway escaped while in a marshal's custody, the marshal had to forfeit the slave's full value to the owner. Persons guilty of abetting slave escape were subject to fine and a maximum prison sentence of six months. As in southern courts, slaves could not testify against whites, but a master's circumstantial evidence was easily admissible. Federal commissioners received \$5 for proslave verdicts and \$10 for decisions favorable to masters. If warranted by a threat of interference, federal officers were authorized to accompany the slave out of the area of risk.

## Underground Railroad

Begun in the 1780's by Quakers, a network of antislavery northerners began helping fugitive slaves reach safety in free states and Canada. Called the Liberty Line, it had gained fame by the 1830's and may have enabled as many as 60,000 slaves gain freedom - most from the upper South. Most of the travel was by night between "stations" and "conductors" were available to assist in crossing border points such as Cincinnati, Ohio and Wilmington, Delaware. Harriet Tubman and Levi Coffin were among the better known rescuers. Northern defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 and the continued operation of the Underground Railroad infuriated southern slave owners.

## Compromise Measures of 1850

## Causes of the Civil War

The Texas Revolution [1835 -1836] and the Mexican War [1846 - 1848] transferred over half the national territory of Mexico to the United States and brought about another crisis over slavery. This territory included Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and several of the Rocky Mountain States. The fight over whether they would enter the Union as slave or free states brought the country to the brink of civil war before the Compromise Measures of 1850 resolved the situation. Under the compromise California would be admitted as a free state and territorial governments would be established in the remainder of the cession with authority to decide for themselves whether to permit slavery.

### **Uncle Tom's Cabin**

In 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe published Uncle Tom's Cabin, a strong indictment of slavery. The book quickly became one of the most popular in the North selling 500,000 copies in its first five years. It did much to stir up militant antislavery sentiment in the northern states.

### **Kansas-Nebraska Act**

In 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois introduced a bill to organize the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and open them to white settlement. The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the Missouri Compromise and provided that settlers in the territories should decide **“all questions pertaining to slavery.”** This was known as the "doctrine of popular sovereignty". Since Kansas and Nebraska were north of the line established in the Missouri Compromise, the act made possible the extension of the slave system into territory previously considered free soil. Soon, settlers in Kansas were engaged in a bloody battle to decide the slavery issue.

The passage of the act caused a political explosion in the North. Abraham Lincoln, a longtime member of the Whig Party, represented the view of many thousands when he wrote, **“the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused him as he had never been before.”** Antislavery groups met to form a new party, which they named the Republican Party. By 1856 the party was broad enough and strong enough to field a national ticket, headed by John C. Frémont, in the

## Causes of the Civil War

presidential election which the Republicans lost by a relatively narrow margin.

### **The Dred Scott Case**

Dred Scott, a slave, had sued for his freedom on grounds that when his master had taken him to free territories, he was no longer a slave. The Supreme Court decided the case in 1857 when a majority of the justices ruled that Scott did not have the right to file suit in state or federal courts because he was not a citizen. As a slave, he was considered property. The justices went further in ruling that Congress had no power to exclude slavery from the territories so the Missouri Compromise and other legislation limiting slavery were unconstitutional. This decision added fuel to the fire of the antislavery movement in the north.

### **The Lincoln-Douglas Debates**

In 1858 Steven Douglas was running for reelection to the Senate from Illinois. His opponent was Abraham Lincoln, then the leader of the Republican Party in Illinois. In a series of seven debates, Lincoln and Douglas argued, among other things, the question of the extension of slavery. Douglas stood on his doctrine of popular sovereignty, holding that the people of the territories should decide whether to have slavery or not. Lincoln, on the other hand, argued that slavery was **“a moral, a social, and a political wrong”** and that it was the duty of the federal government to prohibit its extension into the territories.

The campaign showed the South that the Republican Party was steadily growing in strength and that it would oppose the extension of slavery by every possible means.

### **John Brown**

John Brown was an abolitionist from Pennsylvania where for 20 years he had been involved in educating young blacks. In 1855 he and his five sons went to the Kansas Territory to join the struggle between anti and pro slavery forces. He and his sons were active participants in the fight against proslavery groups from Missouri who killed a number of abolitionists at Lawrence, Kansas. In revenge, Brown and his sons

## Causes of the Civil War

killed five proslavery adherents on May 24, 1856. This incident and his success in withstanding a large party of attacking Missourians in August 1856 gained Brown national fame. In 1857 Brown began a plan for freeing slaves by armed force and a slave uprising. He recruited a small force and after several setbacks he seized the United States arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia on October 16, 1859 with 18 men, including several of his sons. They were surrounded by local militia who were reinforced the next day by a company of U. S. Marines under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee. Ten of Brown's men, including two of his sons, were killed in the ensuing battle. John Brown was charged and convicted of several crimes including treason and murder and hanged in Charlestown, Virginia in December 1859.

## **The 1860 Presidential Election**

The political races leading up to the 1860 presidential election reflected the deep divisions within the country. William Seward was the leading candidate going into the Republican Convention in Chicago in May 1860 but Abraham Lincoln rapidly caught up and won the nomination on the third ballot. The Democrats, long a unifying force in the nation, split over sectional differences. Northern Democrats elected Steven A. Douglas. At a second convention in Richmond, Virginia southern Democrats nominated Vice President John Breckinridge. A group of conservatives under the Constitutional Union Party fielded a fourth candidate, John Bell of Tennessee. With Republicans united behind Lincoln and Democrats split with a third party candidate drawing some of their votes, there was little doubt about the outcome.

Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin were the first men to win from one section of the country and to be elected by the electoral votes of states from the same geographical area. They only won 39.9% of the popular vote but received 180 of 303 electoral votes. Lincoln did not get a single vote in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. The results of the election were fully known on the evening of November 8, 1860.

Mr. Lincoln was elected on a Republican platform that upheld the right of slavery in the South but other provisions were hostile to

## Causes of the Civil War

southerners. It opposed slavery in the territories and the Dred Scott decision that defined slaves as "property". The party was dedicated to preserving the Union against Southern secession and "protection of American industry" through the raising of tariffs.

### **Secession**

The Republican platform, upon which Lincoln was elected, clearly informed the people of the South that the guarantees of the Constitution, the doctrines of state's rights and other principles of government that they cherished would be ignored. While not a technical declaration of war, the North now had the power to control the government and deprive the southern minority of its rights.

The South maintained with the depth of religious conviction that the Union formed under the Constitution was a Union of consent and not of force and that the original States were not the creatures but the creators of the Union. They maintained that these States had gained their independence, their freedom, and their sovereignty from the mother country, and had not surrendered these on entering the Union. By the express terms of the Constitution, all rights and powers not delegated to the national government were reserved to the States and the people. The South challenged the North to find one trace of authority in the Constitution for invading or coercing a sovereign State.

The North, on the other hand, maintained that the Union formed under the Constitution was intended to be perpetual. That sovereignty was a unit and could not be divided. That whether or not there was any express power granted in the Constitution for invading a State, there was a right of self-preservation inherent in all governments. And, that the life of the Union was essential to the life of liberty.

To the charge of the North that secession was rebellion and treason, the South replied that the essential doctrine in the Constitution was, "the right to govern rests on the consent of the governed," and that the right of independent action was among those reserved to the States.

## Causes of the Civil War

As soon as it was certain that Lincoln had won, the South Carolina legislature met in a special convention on December 17, 1860, in Charleston. Three days later the convention unanimously passed an ordinance dissolving **“the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States.”**

To insure that no effort to save the Union had be spared, Mr. Crittenden, of Kentucky, introduced resolutions proposing amendments to the constitution which would have saved the Union, and which received every Southern vote except the South Carolina senators, who had withdrawn. They proposed to adopt the Missouri compromise line. To prohibit Congress from abolishing the slave trade between the States, or slavery in places where the United States had exclusive jurisdiction, or in the District of Columbia, without the consent of Maryland and of the slaveholders. They proposed a more effective provision for the recovery of fugitive slaves. A substitute was offered by Mr. Clark, of New Hampshire, declaring that the provisions of the constitution were adequate for the preservation of the Union. The resolutions of Mr. Crittenden were defeated and the substitute was adopted by a united vote of the Republicans. The vote of the Republicans was a clear denial of the necessity of compromise and a refusal of any further negotiations.

With no compromise in sight, conventions were held in other southern states. Mississippi became the second state to secede January 9, 1861 followed by Florida January 10, Alabama January 11, Georgia January 19, Louisiana January 26, and Texas February 1. On February 4 representatives of all the seceded states except Texas met at Montgomery, Alabama to establish the provisional Confederate States of America. Four days later they adopted a constitution and on February 9 Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was elected provisional President and Alexander H. Stevens of Georgia was elected provisional Vice President. They were to hold office until February 22, 1862 but the results of an election in November 1861 give them permanent status.

In a final effort to stem the number of seceding states, a Peace Congress met in Washington in February 1861. It was made up of representatives of twenty-three states. None of the seven states that had already left the Union were represented and several of the

## Causes of the Civil War

northern states initially refused to send delegates. Then, fearing that the friends of reconciliation would gain dominance, the hard-liners appointed delegates who succeeded in defeating any practical results from the Peace Congress.

In his inaugural address, President Lincoln stated that he would **"hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government"**. He promised that the government would not "assail" the states of the South and pleaded that the new government be given a chance to prove that it was not hostile. Then on April 15, 1861, President Lincoln made a call for 75,000 men with which to invade the southern states. The upper South refused to comply in this effort to coerce the seceded states. In their refusal to aid or be a party to an invasion of the South, Virginia seceded on April 17, Arkansas on May 6, North Carolina on May 20 and Tennessee on June 8.

## War

As the Southern states seceded, they seized and occupied most of the federal forts within their borders or off their shores. Only four remained under the control of the Union, Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina and Forts Jefferson, Pickens, and Taylor in Florida. In January 1861 President Buchanan tried to send troops and supplies to Fort Sumter on the unarmed merchant ship *Star of the West*. The ship was forced to turn back when the batteries at Charleston Harbor opened fire on it. On April 6, President Lincoln notified the governor of South Carolina that he was sending a relief expedition to Fort Sumter. The relief ships were turned back and on April 11 General P. G. T. Beauregard demanded that the fort surrender. Receiving an unsatisfactory reply, he ordered his batteries to open fire on Fort Sumter at 4:30 AM April 12, 1861. It is true that the South fired the first shots of the war but as Hallam points out in his *Constitutional History*, **"The aggressor in war is not the first that uses force, but the first who renders force necessary."** Another important fact is the North invaded the South. The Civil War was a defensive war for the South. The North was fighting for domination and the South was fighting for survival.

## Causes of the War

## Causes of the Civil War

**Slavery** was definitely an issue leading up to the war. Northerners had been involved in abolition movements, fighting slavery in the territories, and flaunting fugitive slave laws for a long time. But when you look at the Republican platform of 1860, only slavery in the western territories was threatened and the right of slave ownership in the South was upheld. President Lincoln had publicly stated that: **"If he could save the Union by freeing the slaves, he would do it; if he could save it by freeing one-half and keeping the other half in slavery, he would take that plan; if keeping them all in slavery would effect the object, that would be his course."** For Lincoln, the issue of slavery was secondary to saving the Union. Gen. U. S. Grant said: **"Should I become convinced that the object of the Government is to execute the wishes of the abolitionists, I pledge you my honor as a man and as a soldier, I would resign my commission and carry my sword to the other side"**. George Lunt in *Origins of the Late War* stated: **"A war simply for the abolition of slavery should not have enlisted a dozen regiments in the North."** In the South it has been estimated that less than 20 percent of Confederate soldiers were involved in slavery or had any interest in slavery. If slavery had been the principal issue, it is doubtful that the South could have recruited enough men to raise an army. There is one other fact that, by itself, discredits slavery as the cause of the war. At any time prior to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation taking effect January 1, 1863, the South could have laid down her arms and retained slavery in the South.

**Tariff laws** were a more likely cause of war because they mostly benefitted the North at the expense of the South. The country was on the brink of an armed conflict in 1833 over the Tariff of 1828 and the South Carolina Ordinance of Nullification. Tariffs became an issue again with a provision in the 1860 Republican platform for raising the tariff.

**The True Cause of the war** is best summed up in the statement that: **both sides fought and suffered for liberty as bequeathed by the Fathers--the one for liberty in the union of the States, the other for liberty in the independence of the States.** President Lincoln had made it clear from the beginning that he was determined to preserve the Union at all cost. The South, on the other hand, was watching the

## Causes of the Civil War

conversion of the federal government into a government of a majority of numbers with unlimited powers. It was becoming a government in which the South would be a minority ruled by a northern majority.

Jefferson Davis said: **"We are not fighting for slavery, We are fighting for independence."** Mr. Percy Greg, a famous English historian, said: **"The North fought for empire which was not and never had been hers; the South for an independence she had won by the sword, and had enjoyed in law and fact ever since the recognition of the thirteen 'sovereign and independent States,' if not since the foundation of Virginia. Slavery was but the occasion of the rupture, in no sense the object of the war."** Captain Raphael Semmes, CSN, said on 5 August 1861, **"With the exception of a few honest zealots, the canting hypocritical Yankee cares as little for our slaves as he does for our draught animals. The war which he has been making upon slavery for the last 40 years is only an interlude, or by-play, to help on the main action of the drama, which is Empire; and it is a curious coincidence that it was commenced about the time the North began to rob the South by means of its tariffs. When a burglar designs to enter a dwelling for the purpose of robbery, he provides himself with the necessary implements. The slavery question was one of the implements employed to help on the robbery of the South. It strengthened the Northern party, and enabled them to get their tariffs through Congress; and when at length, the South, driven to the wall, turned, as even the crushed worm will turn, it was cunningly perceived by the Northern men that 'No slavery' would be a popular war-cry, and hence, they used it."**

The free States had announced their determination to exclude slavery from the Territories of the United States and they had the strength to do it. They did not consider the provisions of the Constitution to be an obstacle to their plans. The result was a majority of free states in the Senate, which was the only balance in the government against the population advantage of the North. It was clear that the South had no protection of its rights under the Constitution and no chance at a balance of power in the government. Several attempts at reaching a compromise ended in failure. The Southern states were left with two choices. Live under a strong central government controlled by northern interests or withdraw from the Union and form their own government.

## Causes of the Civil War

From the earliest days of this nation, the legality of secession had been argued and the first threats of secession were made by New England states. However, when the southern states began claiming their right to secede the same men that drove them to secession accused them of treason. The southern states wanted to leave in peace. In one of his first speeches Jefferson Davis, the new President of the Confederacy, stated: **"In independence we seek no conquests, no aggrandizements, no concessions of any kind from the States with which we have lately been confederated. All we ask is to be let alone; that those who never held power over us shall not now attempt our subjugation by arms."**

It is interesting to note that after Jefferson Davis' capture and imprisonment at Fortress Monroe, the North was so determined to punish him that they first tried to implicate him in Lincoln's assassination. When that failed, they tried to implicate him in the alleged cruelty to prisoners at Andersonville. The night before he was hung, they offered the commandant of Andersonville a reprieve if he would implicate Davis. The commandant refused. Finally, officials in Washington issued three separate indictments for treason against Davis which were eventually disposed of by nolle prosequi (no prosecution). One writer stated that: **"these proceedings are a virtual confession on the part of the Northern people, that they were wrong on the real question at issue in the war, and therefore that the South was right."**

I submit that the true cause of the Civil War was a conflict over the form and control of the Federal Government. The South demanded a central government of limited powers as specified in the Constitution while the North was constantly trying to expand the powers of federal government, even to extents that the South believed to be unconstitutional. There was a power struggle over slavery in the territories that translated into who controlled the Senate and, by extension, the federal government. These struggles came about because of the dissimilar interests of an industrial North and an agricultural South, differing views on the purpose of the Federal government, and attempts to prostitute the powers of the government for the advantage or disadvantage of the North or South. Some of the secondary reasons were slavery and the abolition movement, nullification by states of Federal statutes, enforcement of the Fugitive

## Causes of the Civil War

Slave Law, the John Brown raid, Uncle Tom's Cabin, the Dred Scott decision, and the growing hostility between the North and South. The last straw was the sectionalism in the election of 1860.

A good analogy of the troubles between the North and South is a troubled marriage. In the beginning, two people like each other enough to vow to stay together "until death do us part." Then they start trying to change each other. One doesn't like the slavery practices of the other and attempts to control the finances in the marriage. The other partner objects to changes in the original agreements and having to pay most of the bills. Friction builds until one partner demands a divorce. The other partner is willing to resort to domestic violence if necessary to prevent the divorce. The weaker partner finally is forced to stay in an unhappy marriage under the domination of the stronger partner.

## The Aftermath

Two days before the surrender, General Robert E. Lee stated that, **"We had, I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain and rights to defend for which we were in duty bound to do our best, even if we perished in the endeavor."** The only surrender offered the South was unconditional and the only term was submission to a government in which they no longer had confidence. To their credit, the defeated Confederates rejected all suggestions of guerilla warfare and returned to their homes. **"Had the South permitted her property, her constitutional rights and her liberties to be surreptitiously taken from her without resistance and made no moan, would she not have lost her honor with them? If the alternative were between such a loss and armed resistance, is it surprising that she preferred the latter."**

The "butcher's bill" of deaths of Americans in the Civil War is estimated at 620,000. The Union armies had from 2,500,000 to 2,750,000 men. The Confederate armies had from 750,000 to 1,250,000 men.

## Casualties in the Civil War

	Battle Deaths	Disease & Other Cause	Generals Killed	Total Losses
Union	110,070	250,152	46	360,222

## Causes of the Civil War

Confederate	94,000	164,000	76	258,000
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### **Casualties in all wars prior to 1861**

	Killed	Wounded
Revolutionary War	2,200	6,500
War of 1812	1,877	3,737
Mexican War	1,049	7,929
Total Casualties		19,227

Almost 140 years later, the effects of the Civil War are still with us. The North won and created the strong federal government that they wanted. Rather than the strictly limited government envisioned by our forefathers, Washington has its finger in almost everything we do. The great benevolent Uncle Sam takes around 40% of our income and returns part of it with strings attached to control how it is spent. Although James Madison said he could find no provision in the Constitution that gave the government the authority to take money from one person and give it to another, we have government welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and, before long, a national health insurance. As the federal government finds more things to do for us, it takes a larger share of our income and gains more control of our lives. Every day our government is moving us further away from democracy and closer to socialism.

What would life be like today if the Confederacy had won? The federal government would probably be only a fraction of its present size. Its activities would be confined to national defense, relations between states, and relations with other countries. Our relations with government would be mostly on the state and local level. We would probably have more control over our lives and more privacy. An interesting situation to contemplate.

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## Causes of the Civil War

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