

# **FATHER ABRAHAM PUTS THE HOUSE IN ORDER: THE COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR**

## **I. The Rise of Abraham Lincoln**

♦A. *Dred Scott: Failed southern attempt to outlaw slavery debate by denying Congress's power over slavery & possibility of black rights.*

♦B. *Father Abraham: Ideas that propelled Lincoln's rise after 1856*

·1. Lincoln as a lifelong, true-believing Whig, nationalist, inheritor of many Federalist ideas.

*-Lincoln was pro-business & pro-development on economic issues, but he also saw the need for a strong, energetic national government that would actively use its powers.*

*-Like most northern Whigs, Lincoln believed in the new patriotic nationalism championed by Daniel Webster: "Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable!"*

*-Viewed U.S. as a fatherland, a unitary nation created by the whole people as expressed in the Preamble, not just a "firm league of friendship."*

·2. Lincoln's unique position, outlined in 1858 Senate campaign: slavery was "a moral, social & political wrong," but races should not be socially equal; nation would be all slave or all free soon.

*-"House Divided" speech (clip): charged that South & Democrats were conspiring to make slavery legal everywhere, and also followed the traditional view that "imperium in imperio" (a division of sovereignty) could not be maintained forever.*

·3. Lincoln-Douglas debates brought Lincoln to national prominence, even though he lost.

## **II. Last Years of the Old Republic**

♦A. *Rigged, pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution (for Kansas) precipitated final rupture in party system*

- 1. Rejected by Kansas voters, Lecompton was supported by President Buchanan & pushed by Southern Democrats in Congress.
- 2. Believing Lecompton made a mockery of popular sovereignty & democracy, Stephen Douglas & his allies broke with Southern Democrats.

♦***B. 1859: The Year of Extremism***

- 1. Northern extremism: John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, VA (trying to start a bloody slave rebellion, funded by "Secret Six"), positive public reaction to it. Worst southern fears confirmed.

*-Panic spread in South, beginning of southern exodus from free states.*

- 2. Southern extremism: demands for a federal slave code, Southern Commercial Convention's call for reopening of international slave trade.

♦***C. The Election of 1860 and the Death of the Party System***

- 1. After southern walkout at Democratic convention, Douglas was nominated for president. Then Southern Democrats hold new convention & nominate their own candidate, John C. Breckenridge.
- 2. Republicans picked the upstart Abraham Lincoln as less antislavery, less controversial candidate than frontrunner William Seward.
- 3. In 4-way race, Lincoln won electoral college majority with minority of popular vote & without even appearing on the ballot in most of South.

### **III. Secession Winter, 1860-61: The End of the Jeffersonian Experiment**

***A. Facing a "Black Republican" president, Lower South seceded immediately, Nov.-Dec. 1860.***

Secession regarded by South as a legal proceeding based on "compact" theory of union.

***B. Impasse: Upper South refused to secede, national majority seemed to oppose both secession & use of force to prevent it.***

**C. Defeat of Crittenden Compromise (Dec. 1860) and the proposals of the Peace Convention (Feb. 1861), offering permanent guarantees for slavery.**

**D. Outbreak of the Civil War**

1. Lincoln's inauguration, Mar. 1861

*-- Slavery would be protected, but the Union was perpetual, Lincoln said; states could not lawfully leave, and those that tried were in rebellion; laws would be enforced.*

2. In crisis over federal property, SC besieged & shelled Ft. Sumter.

2. Lincoln called out 75,000 troops to stop the rebellion.

3. Believing that this use of force to coerce obedience violated basic American (& Jeffersonian) principles, the Upper South seceded, war began.

*-- Southern men had no problem coercing their own slaves, families, & northern politicians.*

**IV. Consequences of the Civil War**

**♦The End of Slavery (as a war measure & an unintended consequence)**

.Basis for black civil rights laid in northern responses to southern violence and intransigence

.Despite conservatism of the Emancipation Proclamation, by mid-1863, the abolition of slavery was a given and "a new birth of freedom" (from Gettysburg Address) was on the way.

*Increasing racism of Lincoln's opponents. Cartoons: Northern Coat of Arms; MISCEGENATION OR THE MILLENNIUM OF ABOLITIONISM; "Miscegenation Ball"*

.Lincoln's murder (by Confederate agent John Wilkes Booth) & rise of KKK paved way for Radical Reconstruction of the South

*With blacks voting & serving in office, southern states belatedly began public school systems & other social reforms*

*Efforts capped by 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment guaranteeing due process & equal protection of laws & extending federal constitution to states & local communities*

.GOP conservatism on property rights prevented widespread land & wealth redistribution to freed slaves, ended Reconstruction early; rights soon lost again.

♦ **Lack of southerners in Congress during war & Reconstruction gave GOP free hand to pursue their agenda**

.Series of new western states created (often with low populations) to build long-term GOP majority – lasted until 1932

.Expansion & centralization of U.S. government, growth in coercive power, permanent control of state military forces (converted to National Guard).

*Also, Homestead Act & land grants for colleges*

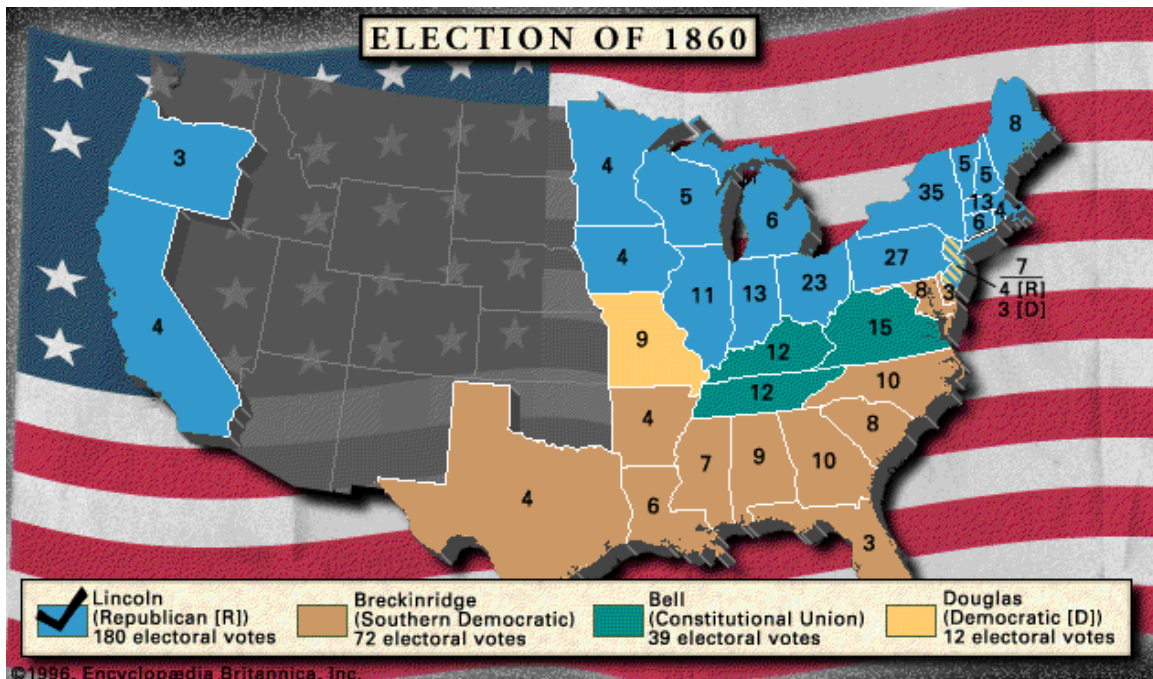
♦ **Biggest beneficiaries of Civil War were northern business interests**

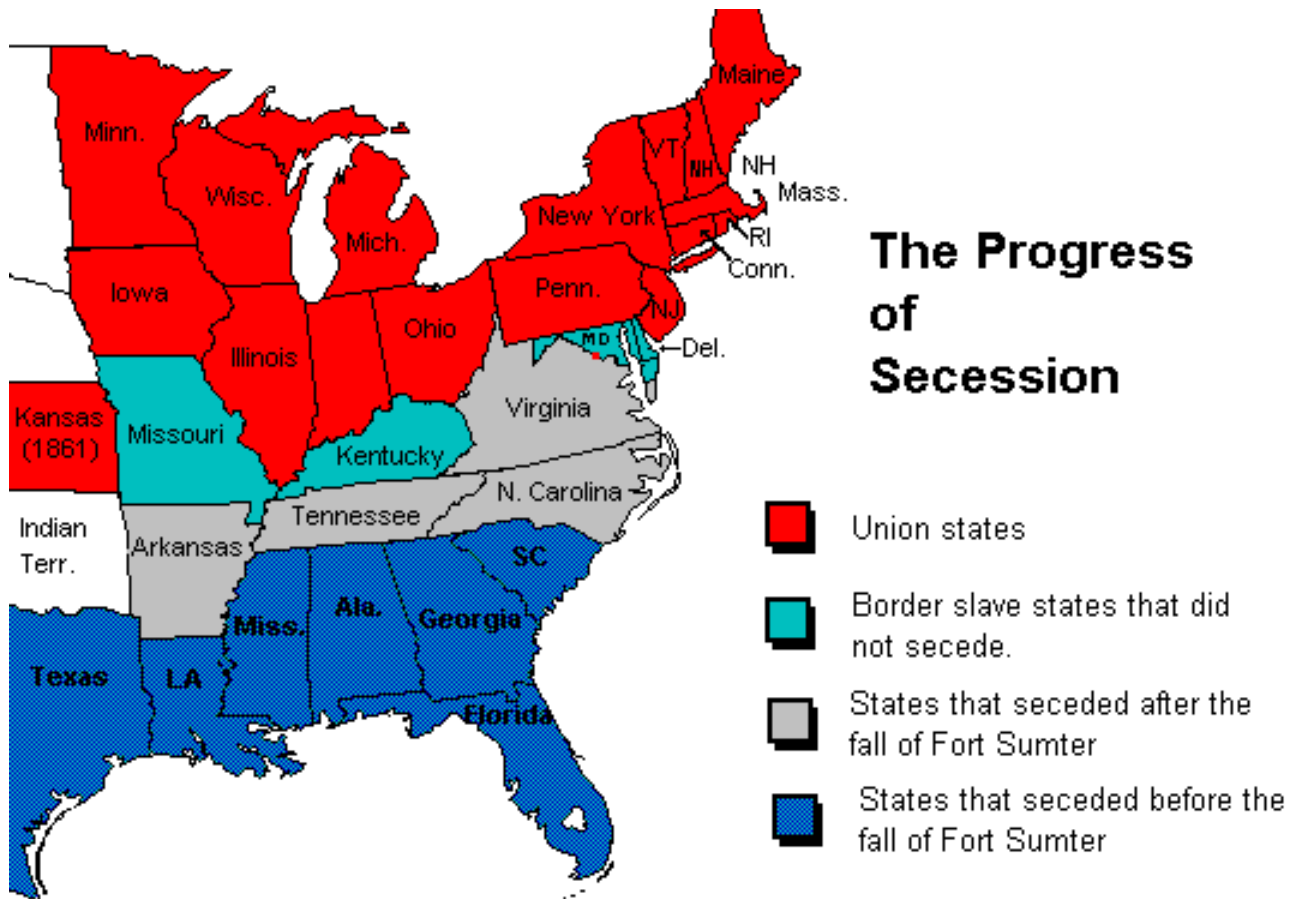
.National paper currency (Greenbacks) & national finances entrusted to Wall Street for the first time; high protective tariff for industry; income taxes.

.National markets created & protected by government, followed by first overseas imperialism for new markets & materials (Hawaii, Latin America, Asia).

.Republican judges gave corporations absolute protection from unions & regulation

.National Guard repurposed as a force to protect property & upper classes from immigrants and worker in cities; armories built as literal castles.





## The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

### ★*Booth's Conspiracy*

★After conferring with Confederates in Canada, Booth organized a failed conspiracy to kidnap Lincoln in March 1865. Right-hand man was Confederate vet Lewis Paine.

★11 April 1865: Booth heard Lincoln speech supporting limited suffrage for blacks.

★The Assassination, 14 April 1865: 5 days after Lee's surrender, Booth & his men planned to wipe out all the top leaders of the government at once (esp. Lincoln, V-P Andrew Johnson, Secretary of State William Seward), & revive the South.

★***Booth shot & killed Lincoln, dramatically escaped; Paine slashed Seward's throat and stabbed him repeatedly, but failed to kill him; Johnson's attacker lost his nerve.***