

**Consequences of the American Civil War**

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## **Consequences of the American Civil War**

Countries have their defining moments. For the United States of America (USA), it was the Civil War fought between 1861 and 1865. The Union forces had to fight the 11 Southern states, which seceded from the Union to form the Confederate States of America. The war remains the deadliest that has been fought on American soil, with estimates of between 600,000 and 800,000 people dying during this period alone (Foote & Hess, 2021). Nonetheless, the Union was determined to have the 11 States join it to form one strong nation. The war would have a lasting impact on America due to the results that reshaped its political front. The end of the Civil War confirmed USA's single political entity. It established a more centralized federal government, led to the abolition of slavery and the freeing of more than 3 million enslaved people, and laid the foundation for the country to emerge as a world power in the 20th Century.

The period after the Civil War was the reconstruction era that lasted between 1865 and 1877. The South was in disarray after the defeat from the North. Therefore, the Union had many bills and laws aimed at reintegrating the South into the federal structure (Foote & Hess, 2021). The Republican Party played a critical role in moving towards a centralized government with all states part of the federal government. However, the reconstruction era came with more challenges attached to the violence that arose as the southern culture and society changed in numerous ways. First, the emancipation proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln was a big win for the enslaved people and a loss for the Southerners who depended on them for their plantations (Draper, 2021). The emancipation proclamation that came into effect in January of 1863 legally freed 3.1 million of the 4 million enslaved people (Draper, 2021). Secondly, the South did not take this lightly. The freeing of the enslaved people was not a welcome gesture for everyone. In the South, the rise of the riots and violence against the Black communities and the

formation of racist groups like the Ku Klux Klan made the South more challenging for the formally enslaved people. The fight for freedom had just begun.

Nonetheless, the election of the Republican majority in Congress in 1866 enabled them to provide a fighting ground for the enslaved people. The passing of the 13th amendment was a sign that abolition of the slavery process was relevant and due (Masur, 2020). The election led to the 14th amendment, which played a critical role in upgrading the rights of African Americans. President Ulysses S. Grant's administration continued protecting citizenship rights, giving them a lifeline. The 15th amendment granted them the right to vote, making it easier to push toward making decisions affecting them during this period (Lande, 2017). However, one should not view this as a win since life remained difficult for the African Americans due to the crop sharing systems and the lack of skills to participate in the market.

However, the unification of the USA led to the rise of industrialism. The South's agrarian economy linked with the industrialized North to provide materials and give the USA an economic boost (Masur, 2020). Laws provide more impetus for growth. For instance, the Morrill Tariff of 1861 increased the import tariff in America to foster the rapid expansion of the industries in the country. The Transcontinental Railroad Acts supplied more federal subsidies in loans and land, providing an impetus to the USA's industrial growth (Draper, 2021). This led to the creation of massive companies and corporations, spurring an emergence of entrepreneurs.

Overall, the Civil War was a challenging moment for America but was a platform that allowed it to rediscover itself and fight for the less fortunate. The emancipation period saw more enslaved people freed, leading to more laws to protect them after their release. The unification of America provided more sharing of resources, with the North providing the industries and the South offering raw materials. Despite the violence meted out on formerly enslaved people,

Republicans in Congress passed laws to protect their citizens and improve their participation in the economy. The Civil War changed America forever, making it a robust, industrialized, centralized federal government globally.

## References

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