

A Quick Reference to Reconstruction and the Future

Tip: Does having dates mean students are expected to memorize them? The answer is “no.” To understand how things happened, you want to notice the **order** of events. Think of it this way: if you were watching two people fight, how you interpreted things would probably depend on who did what first.

Post-Civil War Shift to Power in the North, in the Federal Government, and in Industries

The Republican Party’s predecessor parties led it to have many of the issues previously associated with the Whigs, such as favoring internal improvements. They also countered the Whigs; for example, the Whigs were becoming nativist and the countermove was being pro-immigration. The X’s in the table are based on specific lists of platform issues in the *Encyclopedia of American History*.

Issues of 3 Anti-Slavery Parties and Dates of Campaigns for the Presidency	Liberty	Free Soil		Republican	
	1840, 1844	1848	1852	1856	1860
Free soil (including specifics such as supporting the Wilmot Proviso)	X	X	X	X	X
Pro-internal improvements in general and/or a transcontinental railroad		X		X	X
Homestead provision so people could get land		X	X		X
Pro-immigration			X		X
Pro (somewhat) protective tariff					X

Republican – Democratic Power in House and Senate

Once the 11 Confederate states left the Union, those remaining in the Senate and House of Representatives could vote for what they wanted **without having to negotiate** with those favoring Southern issues.

The change in party balance shows the results of secession: the Northern Senators and Congressmen can get the laws they want—and you’ll see in the yellow below. The South will not have representatives and Senators until they are readmitted to the Union.

Political Power in Senate and House	1857	1861
Senators, Democratic	36	10
Senators, Republican	20	31
Representatives, Democratic	118	43
Representatives, Republican	92	105

What Republican Legislation from 1861 to 1864 Set the Direction of the Post-Civil War Era?

The issues passed by these Senators and Representatives included:

- 1861—**Increased protective tariff** with subsequent additions through 1869 raising tariffs to the rate of just under 50% (Protective tariffs helped industrialists and became a Republican principle.)
- 1862 +—**Transcontinental railroad established**—land grants for a **Northern route**
- 1862—**Homestead Act**—160 acres of public land to heads of families for residence for five years, a small fee (In 1866 there was an equivalent act for Southern blacks, but its implementation was blocked by landowners short of labor in the South.)
- 1862—**Land grant colleges (Morrill Act)**—30,000 acres to states in the Union for each Congressional office held (Senator or Representative) to establish **agriculture colleges** (70 established)

1864—**National banking system**—uniform currency, with a tax on state bank notes driving them out of circulation (greenbacks again backed by gold in mid-1870s)

Timeline: Phases of Reconstruction to the Beginning of the Gilded Age – April 1865 to 1877

Date	Details
1864-0	Reminder: Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse (VA)
1865-01	Reminder: 13th amendment ended slavery —passed (not yet ratified by the states. What do former slaves do? Seek family separated from them. In the future, they form churches and schools.

Date	Details
1865-05	<p>Andrew Johnson, former Vice-President, a “War Democrat” – His plan for restoration of the Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Premise—Like Lincoln’s plan, the states never left the Union ▪ Presidential control like Lincoln’s plan but he is lenient to white supremacists, such as those writing “black codes.”
1865-11	<p>Black Codes—New state legislatures started passing. Vagrancy laws forced employment with private individuals to pay fines; forbidden to rent or own land, could not change jobs, could not do work other than as farm or domestic labor.</p> <p>Tip:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where have you heard the name black codes or a similar name? ▪ Ask yourself how you would feel when you heard this if you’d had a son or brother die for the Northern cause or if you were a Congressman?
1865-12	<p>13th amendment—ratified</p> <p>Johnson - Per his plan, 10 states ready for restoration.</p>
1866	<p>Ku Klux Klan started</p> <p>Intent white supremacy; used violence, continued past 1869, when officially disbanded.</p>
1866 +	<p>Congressional Reconstruction had been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Congressional control ▪ 50 % legal voters took oath of allegiance accepting end of slavery <p>Tip: Notice the percentage (It’s not the 10% as with Lincoln’s offer or Johnson’s offer.) Do the math on the years: how long has it been since the Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Courthouse? How are the North and South acting thus far?</p>
1866-03	<p>Actions by the national government in the South using the Freedman’s Bureau—freedmen and abandoned lands—included education program</p> <p>Actions by individual and groups of African Americans in the South: formation of churches and schools.</p>
1866-04	<p>Civil Rights Act—Congress overrode Johnson veto. – Congress moves from a law to an amendment. Tip: Why?</p>
1866-06	<p>14th amendment started with ratification required for readmission—Tennessee ratified and was readmitted to Union.</p> <p>Key provisions that remain significant today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those born in the United States are citizens. (Deals with <i>Dred Scott</i> case.) • States cannot violate “due process of law” – laws like the “black codes” (The 5th amendment had said Congress could not.) <p>Provisions that mattered then and the 14th amendment stopped:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South had been trying to pay the Confederate war debt • The South had been electing Confederates who had previously made an oath to support the Constitution. <p>Tip: What does the South expect? Why not join in? Because Southern states thought Radical Republicans would be defeated with the Congressional elections. They were wrong.</p>
1866-07	<p>Race riots against blacks, New Orleans and Memphis</p> <p>Tip: What is a riot?</p>

Date	Details
	<p style="text-align: center;">Republican loss Democratic win</p>
1877	<p>Electoral Commission, a device to deal with the argument over counting disputed ballots initially in 4 states. The decision is to give Hayes every disputed electoral vote, but the Republicans had given the Democrats something else. It is the Compromise of 1877 – Why do the Democrats accept this victory for Hayes? The federal troops will be out of the South—and what does that mean?</p> <p>Tip: Who is the compromise between?</p>
Closing	<p>What’s a plantation after emancipation? Nothing. Beginning right after the end of the war planters and freedmen developed sharecropping and tenant contracts. They will increasingly be used to control the freedmen—and poor whites.</p> <p>On the other hand, slavery was no longer the law of the land. Further, the freedom and legal rights of freedmen varied with the region in the South. For example, a black city government in place in Wilmington, North Carolina, until 1898 when a white mob destroyed it.</p> <p>The 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments lay the foundation for more rights not just for African Americans, but also for women and other groups.</p>

Copyright C. J. Bibus, Ed.D. 2003-2020

WCJC Department: History – Dr. Bibus
Contact Information: 281.239.1577 or bibusc@wcjc.edu
Last Updated: 2020
WCJC Home: <http://www.wcjc.edu/>