

William seward, john calhoun, and daniel webster assignment

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William Seward, John Calhoun, and Daniel Webster all served as legislators as either Senator or Congressman and then took positions in the executive branch of the government. William Seward and Daniel Webster were both members of the Whig Party, while John Calhoun was a member of the Republican Party. The Whig Party was a political party established during the time of President Jackson to oppose the policies of President Andrew Jackson and the Democratic Party. Members of the Whig Party supported the power of Congress over the executive branch, and pursued a program of economic protectionism and modernization.

All three of them established themselves for nationalist causes, but they had different views on slavery. Seward opposed slavery, while Calhoun was pro-slavery, while Webster took a safe ground by making compromises to both pro- and anti-slavery states. Seward rose to political prominence in New York in the 1830's, serving in the state. He was characterized as generous, spirited, convivial, and impulsive. The dominating issue of whether to allow the extension of slavery into the newly acquired western territories threatened to danger the Senate when Congress convened in December 1849.

Seward rose on the Senate floor to deliver a speech that he called "Freedom in the New Territories." The new senator spent several intense weeks on the preparation of his statement, realizing that it could be taken as the North's answer to Calhoun. Seward acknowledged that the Constitution's framers had recognized the being of slavery and protected it where it existed, but the new territory was governed by a "higher law than the Constitution" — a moral law established by the creator or god.

The New York senator, was against all legislative compromise as “ radically wrong and essentially vicious,” demanded that California be considered as a free state. He warned the South that slavery was doomed and that a rebellion from the Union would happen. The speech hastened the Whig party’s division into proslavery and antislavery perspectives and shrunk many of his natural allies. A decade later, in 1860 and 1861, as southern states began to rebel, Seward became more passive in his attitude toward the South, seeking peaceful methods of resolving the conflict and avoiding war.

A month after Henry Clay’s two-day speech on the Compromise of 1850, a mortally ill John C. Calhoun summoned the strength to write a reply, which his colleague James Mason read to the Senate on March 4. Calhoun asked the Senate to respect the South’s institutions and to protect its economic ways against northern efforts to limit slavery and promote industrial over agricultural interests. Calhoun had seen in his own state how the spread of slavery into the back country improved morals by limiting the countryside of the wrong doing poor whites who had once terrorized the law abiding middle class.

Calhoun believed that “ slavery instilled in the white who remained a code of honor that blunted the disruptive potential of private gain and fostered the civic-mindedness that lay near the core of the republican creed. ” From this standpoint, the expansion of slavery into the backcountry decreased the likelihood for social conflict and stopped the problems when money would become the only measure of self worth, like what happened in New England.

Calhoun was convinced that slavery was the key to the success of American dreams.

Webster viewed slavery as a matter of reality rather than moral principle. He argued that the issue of its existence in the territories had been settled long ago when Congress prohibited slavery in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and split regions into slave and free in the 1820 Missouri Compromise. He believed that slavery's existence could not be eradicated but also that it could not take place in the newly agriculturally barren lands of the southwest.

Attacking radical abolitionists to improve his credibility with southerners, Webster asked northerners to respect slavery in the South and to help in the return of fugitive slaves to their owners. He joined Clay in warning that the Union could never be solved peacefully. The Compromise of 1850 was a series of five bills that were intended to keep off sectional strife. Its goal was to deal with the spread of slavery to territories in order to keep northern and southern interests individual. Throughout this battle, these three men had strong points of view that were expressed in their speeches.

The bill did come to pass and slavery was abolished. Had the Compromise of 1850 not passed, the nation would have erupted in civil war, and the likelihood of a Northern victory would have been much less. It is probable that we would not have a United States of America today if it wasn't for the efforts of Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster crafting and passing the Compromise of 1850. As for William Seward, he made great

points in his speech, but the United States as we know it, would not exist, had his words taken effect.