

# Sample essay on secession debated: georgia's showdown in 1860

[Law](#), [Constitution](#)



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## **Secessionist Thomas Cobb**

The secession debate held in 1860 at Georgia resulted from the election of Abraham Lincoln as the president of the United States. As a result, most states resolved to secede from the US on the basis that the elections had violated the constitution as most of the electors were denied their rights to elect the president of their choice. Others who opposed the secession argued that the Southerners were afraid that this would result to ending slavery, which had been of economic importance to them. In addition, the Republican Party was a minor party and they thought that it President Lincoln could not have won with such minor popularity. In an attempt to resolve the secession crisis, politicians and scholars debated as a way of finding possible ways to resolve the crisis so as to possibly prevent the occurrence of civil war through either supporting or opposing the secession.

According to the speech by secessionist Thomas Cobb, the secession was the best way to detach from the Union that did not recognize the contents written in the constitution. He argued that the allowing the black Americans to have the right to vote was a disgrace. This was because the constitution was made for the white Americans and as such, Negroes had no right to vote

making the election unconstitutional. In addition, his argument was that the Northerners were ambitious to deprive them of the right to have slaves and this was like being robbed of their property thus diminishing the right of liberty. In other words, the election of Lincoln by the minority group who were basically black Americans and the move to end slavery meant that the constitution was not protecting the rights and welfare of the white Americans. The resolution to this deceit, according to Cobb was either the president allows the act of slavery to continue or else, those who supported the act would be forced to withdraw from the union.

### **Benjamin Hill against Secession**

In his effort to oppose the secession, Benjamin Hill argued that there were other means they could use to resolve the crisis other than the secession move. This was in response to the Southerners and any other person felt that the election and anti-slavery movement were not respecting the constitution, In his opinion, Hill argues that every person under the constitution had a right to air their grievances on the issues they felt were undermining them. This included the move to allow minority groups to vote as well as the Northerners' move to end slavery; an attempt that the Southerners felt was undermining the right to own property. Subsequently, Hill suggests that there could be two options for solving the secession crisis.

They included first to allow for the delegates to present their concerns and let the government look for solutions or secondly, secede if their grievances were not listened to. He urged the people that before lobbying for secession, all the states should air their grievances to the Federal government and

allow President Lincoln to resolve them. He further goes on to explain the negative impacts that could result from secession move which included war, lack of market for the Southerners' farm produce among others. Hill concludes by advising the debaters that the call for Georgia Confederation where delegates from each member state were to present their concerns was a suitable way of ending the crisis.

## **Works Cited**

Freehling, William & Simpson, Craig. (Eds). *Secession Debated: Georgia's Showdown in 1860*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.