

# Sample essay on what led the southern states to secede from the union in 1860 and...

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



Since Independence in 1776, the Union lasted for Seventy-three years. But problems began to form between the Southern and the Northern States of the country over issues of slavery and taxation. The northern states wanted to abolish the institution of slavery while the southern states headed by the plantation owners thought that the northern states were infringing on their rights by forcing them to abolish slavery. The election of Abraham Lincoln as the president proved to be the last straw and beginning with South Carolina, the southern states seceded from the union and starting the civil war.

South Carolina led the secession demand and in the convention of South Carolina held on December 25, 1860, the members stated that, " the Government of the United States has become a consolidated Government; and the people of the Southern State, are compelled to meet the very despotism, their fathers threw off in the Revolution of 1776 (Address of South Carolina)." According to the secessionists, the parliament was dominated by the legislatures from the north and this power gave them undue advantage over decision making. They also felt that the northern states were going against the constitution by trying to force everyone to accept to their demands and making it a consolidated democracy instead of it being a confederate of republics. The southern states also felt that the northern states denied their right to hold slaves. The issue of taxation was also seen as a problem as the southern states claimed their taxes were unjustly used by the northerners for their own benefit. The southern states went further and stated that the taxes were not distributed equally among the states but were used to develop the north which lead to the southern states being impoverished and less developed than the northern states.

The election of president Lincoln was seen as the final nail in the coffin for the southern states over their continuation in the union. An editorial that ran in the New Orleans Daily Crescent published on December 14, 1860 goes on to say that, " the election of Lincoln seals this purpose—pledges the party anew to it—reiterates the intention of the party to destroy slavery (The Policy of Aggression)." Although they admitted that this was not the sole reason, the election of Lincoln as president sent a clear message that the northern states were serious about the abolishment of slavery. Abolishment of slavery would have meant complete economic ruin for the plantation owners as without slaves they would be forced to pay for their labor and also worry about impinging on their human rights. The economic ruin coupled with the fear that they would be completely taken over by the values of the northern states were the reasons that made the southern states decide to secede. The southern states felt that over the course of years the values and belief system of the northern and the southern states became completely different. The institutions and industries of the northern states were different from that of the southern states and they could no longer live with the differences. The Southern states could not live with being dominated by the abolitionist beliefs of the northern states and it being imposed on them. The only way they saw out of it was to secede from the union. Thus economic concerns, belief that the constitution was not respected by the northern states, issues with taxation and finally the election of president Lincoln were some of the important reasons why the southern states wanted to secede from the union in 1860 and 1861.

## **Works Cited**

The Policy of Aggression. Teachingamericanhistory. n. d. Web. 7 july. 2015.