

Why the civil war erupted in the us essay

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The main reason that the Civil War erupted in the United States in 1861 was the conflict between the North and the South on the issue of slavery. For the Southerners the debate about slavery gradually evolved into an economic issue based on money and power. The South's economic system was based on cotton, which needed slaves to work the fields.

In the North, some disliked slavery because they felt it was wrong. Most people did not have an opinion on the matter, and even some people condoned it, because abolishing it would be bad for business. They thought that without the slaves, there would be no cotton. Without the cotton the textile industry would suffer.

It all started with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which was enacted by Congress to put limits on the spread of slavery in what was left of the Louisiana Purchase. The Compromise admitted Maine as a free state and Missouri as a slave state in order to keep a balance between the slave states and free states. The South had an economic interest in the spread of slavery to the new territories so that new slave states could be created and the South's political influence would remain strong. The North had an interest in limiting the spread of slavery into new territories for both purposes of controlling Southern political power and supporting the moral issue. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act made slavery possible in any new territory. Senator Steven Douglas supported this Act and wrote popular sovereignty into the bill, which left the issue of slavery up to the people who lived in the territories and their appointed representatives.

People in the North became aware of the danger of the potential spread of slavery. The fate of the Union rested on the election of 1860. The newly formed Republican Party nominee was Abraham Lincoln. The Democratic Party was split between the loyalist and those with slave-holding interests. This Democratic split was the cause of the eventual downfall of slavery by Lincoln. The Northern Unionist Democrats nominated Stephen Douglas, while Vice President John Breckinridge was the candidate for the Southern Democrats. John Bell was the nominee for the Constitutional Union Party. Abraham Lincoln believed that the Constitution forbade the Federal government from taking action against slavery where it already existed, but he was determined to keep it from spreading further.

Lincoln was against secession, calling it unconstitutional. South Carolina made it very clear that if Lincoln won the election that the state and other states would secede from the Union. Abraham Lincoln won the election of 1860 and South Carolina followed as promised and seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860. Between January 9 and February 1, 1861, six other states seceded, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. James Buchanan, the sitting President, felt powerless to act against the South.

In the four months between Lincoln's election and his inauguration, the South was allowed to strengthen its position undisturbed. Following Lincoln's inauguration, the second wave of secession began on April 17 with Virginia. The wave of secession continued with Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina. The only slave states that did not leave the Union were Missouri,

Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware. These were known as Border States that remained loyal to the Union and separated the United States from the newly formed Confederacy.

The secession of the Southern states ultimately led to the first shots in the American Civil War. Lincoln, believing secession to be unconstitutional, vowed to preserve the union at all costs. Lincoln also refused to relinquish control of the federal forts in South Carolina. On April 11, 1861, Confederate general Pierre G.

T. Beauregard demanded that Major Robert Anderson, in charge of Fort Sumter, surrender. Anderson refused, but his supplies were diminishing and only had a few days until it was gone. Beauregard gave an ultimatum to Anderson and again he refused.

The first shots were fired on April 12, 1861, beginning the Civil War. The conflict between the North and the South was inevitable; because the South's economy was based on cotton and therefore on slavery. The North was growing and the South thought it would lose its political power, which could lead to abolishing slavery. The North wanted to limit slavery and keep it out of the new territories. The Missouri Compromise and the Kansas-Nebraska Act only added to the abhorrence between the two groups.

The slavery issue could not be resolved in a respectful manner and would eventually cause a confrontation between the North and the South.