

History



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Two integrated elements happened between 1848 and 1860 that heightened the sectional tensions that ultimately led to the civil war. The first was slavery. The North had abolished slavery, had industrial growth, and grew urban centers, while the Southern life was based on plantations centering on slave labor. The second was the expansion toward the West and Mexico. Southerners wanted slavery to be legal in these new territories, while the North did not agree. Several important events are the Compromise of 1850. This allowed the admission of California, citizens in New Mexico and Utah to vote on the slave issue, no slave trade in Washington D. C., and a more rigorous fugitive slave law. The Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed a vote of the people to determine if slavery would be allowed or not. This causes Kansas to become a battle ground with violence over pro-slavery and anti-slavery views. The Topeka Constitution was created by the legitimate government in Kansas, but the initial government that gained power by fraud continued to remain in power. Dred Scott v. Sandford, a Supreme Court ruling in 1857 ruled that slaves that lived in free territories were still slaves. It further stated Congress did not have the right to exclude slavery from the free territories. In 1860 Lincoln won the election as the first Republican president. The events listed above were a few of the arguments about slavery and slavery in the free territories. If the United States had not expanded its borders the question of slavery might have stayed a free North and slave South longer than it did. However both the North and South felt their way of life was being overrun by the opposite position. It soon became an issue of the whole country had to have slavery or be free. The only other option was for the South to leave the Union. That did not work well either. Bibliography Stevens, J. (2007). Abraham Lincoln's Understanding of the Nature of the

Union: Secession, Slavery and the Philosophical Cause. 2007. Ashbrook Center. Accessed on 24 June from <http://www.ashbrook.org/publicat/thesis/stevens/home.html>