

Missouri compromise



The Missouri Compromise The Missouri Compromise, written by Henry Clay, attempted to limit the slavery boundaries; it was later declared unconstitutional and is also considered one of many events that led to the American Civil War. The compromise became a precedent for settling subsequent North and South disagreements over slavery and duty issues, and it remained in effect until rescinded by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. The Missouri Compromise eased tensions between the North and the South delaying the civil war The American Civil War.

However, it is also considered one of the causes of the civil war because it increased the division of beliefs between the North and South Thus, the Missouri compromise played an important role in the development of the American Civil War. In February, 1819, the House of Representatives considered a bill authorizing the territory of Missouri to frame a constitution. In the past, territories south of the Mason Dixon Line had been automatically made into slave states. Most of Missouri is north of that line but many of its citizens were slaveholders.

A bill to permit slavery in Missouri on a temporary basis, but prohibiting further entry of slaves, passed the House but was rejected by the Senate. Meanwhile, Alabama had been admitted as a slave state, making the number of slave and free states 11 each. As this would ruin the balance between Slave states and Free states in the Senate, Henry Clay proposed the Missouri compromise. The Missouri compromise was created in order to ease tensions between the northern, anti-slavery states, and southern, pro-slavery, states for equal votes in the House of Representatives.

It was used in maintaining balance in power between free and slave states, in an effort to preserve the balance of power in Congress between slave and free states, the Missouri Compromise was passed in 1820 admitting Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. Henry Clay of Kentucky is known as the "Great Compromiser". Clay served in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, where he was elected speaker of the house six times. Prior to Clay holding the position, the speaker of the house had a minor role, but Clay shaped the speakership into a very important and influential job. Clay received his nickname with his masterful negotiation of issues that threatened to tear the relatively new country apart. Henry Clay grew up in Kentucky and represented Kentucky, which was a border state between the South and North, because of this Henry Clay was able to relate to both the North's and South's beliefs on slavery. Since Henry Clay knew both sides of slavery he was able to act as an unbiased representative for the senate and was able to create the Missouri compromise without bias.

The Missouri compromise included a solution to the dispute caused by Missouri wanting to become a new slave state. Largely through the efforts of Henry Clay the amendment was accepted by the House. Missouri was authorized to submit a proslavery constitution and Maine was admitted to the Union. The Missouri constitution was presented to Congress for approval in 1821. It included a paragraph requiring the legislature to prevent the immigration of free blacks into the state. The antislavery faction in Congress objected to this provision and a compromise bill, often called the Second Missouri Compromise, was passed on March 2, 1821.

This measure forbade Missouri to limit the rights guaranteed to all citizens by the federal government, meaning it could not ban the entry of free blacks into the state. Missouri was admitted on August 10, 1821, with the exception of Missouri, this law prohibited slavery in the Louisiana Territory north of the 36° 30' latitude line. The Missouri compromise was successful for almost 30 years. It provided a short-term solution to the problem and delayed the beginning of the American Civil War.

However, conditions in the United States undermined the Missouri compromise and made it difficult to be used. This plan was criticized by many southerners because it would establish a principle that Congress could make laws regarding slavery and the north felt it gave into slavery. In 1854, the Missouri Compromise was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Three years later the Missouri Compromise was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott decision, which ruled that Congress did not have the authority to prohibit slavery in the territories.

It is obvious that the Missouri Compromise could do nothing to prevent the oncoming violence of the Civil War. This shows that although compromise is the preferable option it was not a viable option to prevent the American Civil War. The difference between the North and South were far too numerous and significant to be satisfied by compromise. Sadly in human history it is often results so that it is only possible to resolve conflicts with violence.