

Introduction south
was able to endure
for so



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Introduction

The issue of slavery was a divisive issue between the North and the South in the 1800's. While the Northern part abhorred slavery, the Southerners not only practiced it but they also embarked on a spirited campaign to promote and defend the practice. It is therefore not surprising to note that as the Northern opposition to the vice rose, Southerners who were more tolerant toward the practice also embarked on a spirited justification of their work system and mode of life. This defense by the Southerners finally led to the famous claim that slavery was an evil that could be tolerated and that it eventually brought some positive attributes.

This claim partly explains why slavery in the South was able to endure for so long despite the numerous attempts by the North to outlaw the practice.

(Queen) One claim that the South fronted in trying to defend slavery was by claiming that the black men popularly known as Negroes were nothing but grown up children. For this reason, the Southerners claimed that the Negroes needed to be treated in the same manner as little children. In order, to justify their claim, they banned the treatment of Negro's as mad men or

criminals. This was also justified by the view that Negro's have a low moral and intellectual capacity as compared to their white counterparts.

On top of this, a Negro was perceived to act in irresponsible ways, just as a baby would act. This form of irresponsibility was characterized by the inability to keep anything for use in old age. The Southerners therefore claimed that if such a man were let free in the society he would become a big burden. The society was therefore given the obligation of preventing this from happening and the only way to do so was through subjecting the Negro to some form of slavery. The Negro was also perceived to be of an inferior rank to the whites and putting them at the same level would be the same as giving an upper hand to the white race. This, the Southerners claimed would lead to extinction of the Negro race. In a way, this claim about the Negro being nothing but a grown kid was justified and it led to the success of slavery in the South. (Kirkpatrick) Another claim that the Southerners made to defend slavery in their region was that the Negro slaves under their care were one of the most free and happy people in the world.

To justify this claim, the Southerners allowed children, the weak and the aged Negro's from any form of work. On top of this, this category of the Negro community had all their needs provided for. This group was therefore considered free of any care or any labor. The Negro women were also given light chores and their masters protected them from their abusive husbands. Even for those slaves able to work, the Southerners allowed them to do so for only nine hours. This was considered modest by the Southerners and even by the slaves themselves. The Southerners claimed that the slaves could sleep at any time they felt like a luxury that their white counterparts

did not have. This perception of a slave at liberty made slavery tolerable and led to its success in the South.

(Kirkpatrick) Another claim that the Southerners used in their defense of slavery was that every society was formed by a society of lesser and higher beings. In a speech delivered to the U. S Senate by Senator James Hammond of South Carolina in 1848, he claimed that a society was incomplete if it was devoid of the low class people to do the menial chores. The people in the lower class were supposed to not only have a low intelligence but skill as well.

according to Senator Hammond, if this class of the society was lacking then the other class of higher citizens who are tasked with building the nation and bringing about civilization would also be missing. The senator and the other Southerners argued that this lesser class of people formed the foundation of any government and without it, the government would most likely end up failing. The Southerners considered slaves as members of this lower class of citizens. To them, slave was just but a name given to people who performed a certain kind of work. The Senator claimed that although the Northerners and the rest of the world were working hard to abolish slavery, all that they were merely doing was wiping out the name and not the real essence of slavery. He claimed that only God had the power to abolish slavery by taking away the poor from the face of the earth. According to the Southerners, the only difference between their slaves and the employed class was that they called them slaves and engaged their services for life.

Unlike the other manual laborers, slaves did not face starvation or lack of work at any given time. According to the Southerners, this had led to a high number of beggars in the North unlike the South that had few or no beggars. This claim succeeded in silencing the critics from the North something that gave a new lifeline to slavery in the South. (Dirst) The other important claim that the Southerners made in their defense of slavery was that all the citizens in the region were free of any fears of attack from their slaves. The Southerners claimed that those who were in danger were those outside the state who had distorted ideas about the condition that the slaves lived in.

in demonstrating this, they gave an example of how Virginians would leave behind their households in the care of the slaves to defend their state. These slaves are the same people whom the North claimed that they could wreak havoc given the slightest chance. This claim was supposed to show that the slaves in the South were content with the kind of life they were living and any attempt to change that would be met with resistance from the slaves. This helped in silencing the Northerners and led to an extension of slavery in the South for many more years. (The Staunton Spectator)

Conclusion

The issue of slavery has been one of the most divisive issues between the South and the North in the U. S. While the North abhorred slavery, the South practiced it on a higher level. In order to weather the opposition from the North, they came up with excuses that were meant to defend their reasons for failing to ban the practice.

These excuses ranged from the kind of treatment that the slaves were being given to the positive attributes that the practice had brought to their society. This spirited defense led to the success of slavery in the whole of the Southern region.

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