

The southern
government, that the
confederates had



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The time period after the civil war where the south was readmitted to the union, rebuilt and reformed by the north was called the reconstruction era. During the reconstruction the north attempted to refine the south into the way of the north, slavery free. To aid in this amendments thirteen, fourteen and fifteen were created along with the civil rights bill which abolished slavery, gave African American men the right to vote and recognized them as American citizens. Along with the changes going towards the south, violence and resentment of the north increased.

Protests by the south began with the black codes, to limit freedom of the free slaves, terrorist groups that targeted republican officials and African Americans and the jim crow laws that segregated the races. After the civil war, in 1865, the south didn't have much to return to. Everything was gone, destroyed. The southern government, that the confederates had built, no longer existed. Southern infrastructure was almost completely destroyed, along with southern cities and farms. With losing everything, their homes, farms, and the life they once knew, there was violence and chaos. In attempt to aid the south in their troubles and readmit them into the union, the north began the reconstruction of the south.

Their goal in reconstruction was the economic, social and political rehabilitation of the south and the readmission of the confederate states back into the Union. After President Lincoln's assassination, Andrew Johnson became President. President Johnson's reconstruction plan was extremely lenient towards the south, and many northerners didn't like that. Johnson appointed temporary governors for the southern state government and gave them basic outlines for creating a new state government.

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He decreed that as long as the south abides by the 13th Amendment that outlawed slavery, payed their war debts and swears their loyalty to the union then the southern government could have free reign to rebuild themselves. Johnson allowed the south to treat their former slaves however they wanted, as long as they didn't enslave them. In response to Johnson's leniency, the south enacted the black codes to "restrict freed blacks activity and ensure their availability as a labor force now that slavery had been abolished.

.. this law required blacks to have written evidence of employment for the coming year each January; if they left before the end of the contract, they would be forced to forfeit earlier wages and were subject to arrest.

" (Black Codes history. com) While these codes gave the African American the freedom of an American citizen, although with many limitations, the main purpose of these codes was to restrict former slaves' labor and activity. These codes had the African Americans living like slaves except that they had similar, but restricted, rights to the American citizens. They could own land, if they had the money for it, marry who they wanted etc.

but if they were to break their work contacts they would be punished, have their rights stripped away from them and be forced into free labor, similar to slavery. The north wasn't happy with President Johnson's plan and thought it was flawed and too lenient towards the south. Congress created the civil rights bill in response to the black codes and President Johnson vetoed it. Outraged by the President's veto, the republicans in congress impeached Andrew Johnson and took matters into their own hands and created The Reconstruction Act of 1867. They passed the vetoed civil rights bill which

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contained the 14th and 15th amendments that the south now had to abide by. “ The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution declared that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are American citizens including African Americans.

” (historytunes. com) with the 14th amendment all former African American slaves that were born in the United States was a U. S citizen with equal rights as the whites. The 15th amendment gave the right to all African American males to vote. The ratification of these amendments were a requirement for the south to rejoin the union.

Due to these amendments, a window of opportunities was open for the former slaves of the south. They were now free and viewed as American citizens with the same rights as the white men. They now could own land and businesses, go to school, vote etc. Even with all these newfound rights the African Americans had, they were still poor. Many didn't have enough money to buy land or the education to work as anything other than a plantation worker. Lacking land or education most freed slaves became sharecroppers or tenant farmers. Although they were free, the contracts of the sharecroppers and tenant farmers were unfair and similar to conditions of slavery. Despite all the oppression by the south, there were many African Americans to get past it.

With the African Americans taking up a majority of the southern votes, many Africans ran for office. “ the black political leadership pressed for the elimination of the racial caste system and the economic uplifting of the former slaves. Sixteen African Americans served in Congress during

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Reconstruction... more than 600 in state legislatures, and hundreds more in local offices from sheriff to justice of the peace scattered across the South” (britannica. com) The southerners, outraged by being pushed out of congress and replaced by African Americans, fought back against reconstruction.

They resented the suggestion that their world needed reconstruction and fought against anyone who tried to make changes. They organized terrorist groups, like the Ku Klux Klan, and physically went after republican leaders and African Americans. “ When Democrats waged a campaign of violence to take control of Mississippi In 1875, Grant refused to send federal troops, marking the end of federal support for Reconstruction-era state governments in the South.” (history. com) the republicans were becoming more conservative and began caring less about the south’s reconstruction.

In the presidential election that year, republican Rutherford B. Hayes compromised with the democrats in congress. In exchange for him winning the presidential election, he would acknowledge the democratic control over the south. This compromise marked the end and failure of the reconstruction of the south. Even Though reconstruction was over and slavery was banned from the United States, the south was still struggling to come back from the revolution.

Despite the rights that the African Americans have, racism and segregation was strong in the south. The Jim Crow Laws were enacted to ensure the whites superiority towards the African Americans. “ A century later, the legacy of Reconstruction would be revived during the civil rights movement of the 1960s, as African Americans fought for the political, economic and

social equality that had long been denied them.” (history. com)After the civil war, the north wanted to help rebuild the south and readmit the Confederate states to the Union.

To do so they enacted their reconstruction plan. During the reconstruction period in the south slavery was abolished, the African Americans were given the right to vote, and were recognized as American citizens. Reconstruction was successful in abolishing slavery but was unsuccessful everywhere else. Soon after the reconstruction of south began, protests began against it.

With the black codes, Ku Klux Klan and the Jim Crow Laws the south continued to oppress the African Americans. Eventually the north became tired of fighting for African Americans rights and backed off the south and allowed them to continue in their oppression towards the African Americans.