

Chapter 18: Renewing the Sectional Struggle, 1848-1854

I. The Election of 1848

A. The Candidates

1. **Democratic Party:** Lewis Cass
 - a. **War of 1812 veteran**
 - b. **Favored popular sovereignty when it came to slavery in the western territories**
2. **Whigs:** Zachary Taylor
 - a. **Mexican War hero**
 - b. **Avoided the controversial issues in the party platform (slavery)**
3. **Free Soil Party:** Martin Van Buren (he's back!)
 - a. **Against slavery in the new territories**

B. Results

1. **Taylor wins the election (163 electoral votes to Cass's 127)**

II. Taylor's Presidency (1849-1850)

A. Taylor's Administration

1. The pressing issue was the entrance of **California** and **New Mexico** as states
 - a. Taylor wanted to skip the territory stage and admit both as states
2. **Compromise was necessary but Taylor died before it could be settled, making Millard Fillmore president**

III. California and the Compromise of 1850

A. Gold Brings California into the Union

1. **The discovery of gold brought thousands of people to CA**
2. **The people of CA drafted a constitution in 1849 (which outlawed slavery) and applied to Congress for admission to the Union**
3. **With CA about to enter the Union as a free state, southerners were upset and threatened to withdraw from the Union**

B. The Key Compromisers

1. **This brought together 3 key compromisers:**
 - a. **Henry Clay (The Great Compromiser)**
 - i. Previously had helped with the nullification crisis and the Missouri Compromise
 - ii. He was aided by Stephen Douglas of Illinois (the "Little Giant")
 - iii. Clay believed both the North and South had to make concessions for compromise to be achieved
 - b. **John C. Calhoun (The "Great Nullifier")**
 - i. He favored restoring the balance of free and slave states, the return of runaway slaves, and to leave the question of slavery alone
 - c. **Daniel Webster**
 - i. Favored reasonable concessions to the South including a fugitive slave law that would be enforced
 - ii. Delivered the famous **7th of March Speech** to sway the North toward compromise (slavery was bad, but disunion was worse in his eyes)

C. The Compromise of 1850

1. The issue: whether the territory the United States received as a result of the Mexican War should have slavery
2. **The solution:**
 - a. CA would be admitted as a free state
 - b. New Mexico and Utah were open to slavery based on **popular sovereignty** (the people would decide)
 - c. The slave trade was ended in the District of Columbia
 - d. A **Fugitive Slave Law** was instituted: called for the return of escaped slaves and harsh penalties who failed to return them to their masters
3. **Senator Stephen Douglas helped each piece of this compromise to pass through and reach the president for a signature**
4. **President Fillmore (President Taylor died in 1850) was quick to sign this Compromise and very much wanted the nation to be able to compromise on the issue of slavery**

5. **The Fugitive Slave Law aroused a lot of controversy**
 - a. The Underground Railroad helped slaves escape to the North and Canada
 - i. Harriet Tubman was a famous conductor of the Railroad

IV. The Election of 1852

A. The Candidates

1. **Democratic Party:** Franklin Pierce
 - a. A “dark horse” candidate
 - b. **Favored Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Law**
 - c. **Acceptable to the “slavery wing” of the Democratic Party**

2. **Whigs:** Winfield Scott (didn’t choose their key compromisers)
 - a. **Military veteran from the Mexican War (Whigs nominated yet another war hero)**
 - b. **Favored the Compromise of 1850**

3. **Free Soil Party:** John P. Hale
 - a. **Senator from New Hampshire**

B. Results

1. **Pierce, relatively unknown, won**
2. **This election marked the end of the Whigs (1852)**
3. **Henry Clay died June 29, 1852 ☹**

V. Pierce’s Administration

A. The Gadsden Purchase

1. **Transportation became an issue: there were no clear routes to the new territory that the U.S. had acquired as a result of the Mexican War**
2. **Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, authorized James Gadsden to negotiate a treaty with Mexico (Santa Anna)**
 - a. Paid \$10 million for this area (Santa Anna feared war if he didn’t take the offer)
 - b. The **Gadsden Purchase**, would provide for a **railroad line** in the area and made New Mexico an organized territory
 - c. This led Northerners to call for the organization of the Nebraska Territory

B. Organizing the Nebraska Territory

1. **Stephen Douglas** called for the territory to be split into two: **Kansas** and **Nebraska**
 - a. Slavery in these new territories would be decided by **popular sovereignty**

b. This violated the **Missouri Compromise**

C. The Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854)

1. This Act was pushed through Congress and supported by President Pierce
2. This act repealed the **Missouri Compromise** and in effect the **Compromise of 1850**
3. North refused to enforce Fugitive Slave Law after 1854
4. **Controversy destroyed the Democratic Party**
5. Also led to the development of the new **Republican Party**, made up of Whigs, Democrats, and Know-Nothings (**Republican Party was a sectional party**)

D. Chaos in Kansas

1. It was assumed that Kansas would be a free state and Nebraska a slave state
2. **In 1855 the territorial legislature would be elected**
 - a. **Pro-slavery forces established a puppet government in Lecompton, KS**
 - b. **Free soilers established their own government in Topeka, KS**
3. **In response to a proslavery attack in 1856, John Brown and his followers attacked and killed several pro-slavery men**
 - a. A civil war erupted in Kansas: this period was known as "**Bleeding Kansas**" and lasted until 1861
 - b. President Pierce did nothing to address the conflict in Kansas
4. **Following this, Senator Charles Sumner (Massachusetts) delivered a speech titled: "The Crime Against Kansas"**
 - a. He was a leading abolitionist and verbally attacked a South Carolina Senator (Andrew Butler)
 - b. South Carolina Congressman **Preston Brooks (nephew of Butler)** attacked Sumner with a cane (this event became known as the **Caning of Charles Sumner**)
 - i. In a way, these were the **first blows of the Civil War**

E. Formation of the Republican Party

1. Formed in **1854** over the Kansas-Nebraska Act
2. The party was a sectional party and attracted those **against** the expansion of slavery and included free soilers and anti-slavery Whigs and Democrats
 - a. The party called for the repeal of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the Fugitive Slave Law
3. The Republicans ran their first candidate, **John C. Fremont (an explorer)**, in the 1856 presidential election

F. Looking for New Slave Territories

1. **The Southern "slavocrats" lusted for new territory**
 - a. **They looked to purchase Cuba from Spain**
 - i. The **Ostend Manifesto** was drawn up to offer Spain \$120 million for Cuba
 - aa. **Slavocrats wanted Cuba because it was rich in sugar and already had a large population of enslaved blacks**
 - bb. **When the scheme of acquiring Cuba was figured out by Northerners, Pierce's Administration eventually had to drop it**

Chapter 19: Drifting Toward Disunion, 1854-1861

I. Literature and Slavery

A. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852)

1. Determined to awaken the North to wickedness of slavery, especially the break-up of slave families
2. A book about an enslaved man named Tom and his white slave owner Simon Legree

B. *The Impending Crisis of the South*, by Hinton R. Helper (1857)

1. Attempted to prove that indirectly non-slaveholding whites were the ones who suffered most from the "peculiar institution"
2. The book discussed why slavery was bad for the South's economy and it was banned in the South

II. Election of 1856

A. Candidates

1. **Democrats:** James Buchanan (from PA)
 - a. Supported popular sovereignty
2. **Republicans:** John C. Fremont
 - a. Against the spread of slavery in the new territories
3. **Know-Nothing Party:** Millard Fillmore

B. Results

1. Buchanan wins (174-114) although Fremont carried 11 of 16 free states
2. Many Northerners voted for Buchanan in an attempt to save the Union

III. Buchanan's Administration (1857-1861)

A. Debate over Slavery in Kansas

1. The debate over slavery heightened during Buchanan's Administration
2. He favored popular sovereignty in Kansas
3. In 1857, proslavery settlers in Kansas drew up the **Lecompton Constitution**, which would have permitted slavery in the new state
 - a. It was submitted to Kansas voters for approval but the antislavery settlers refused to vote on it saying that it was not legitimate
 - b. Congress (and Buchanan) considered adopting the agreement on behalf of Kansas, but it was not deemed a good idea

B. Dred Scott Case (1857)

1. Dred Scott was a slave who had lived in a free territory (Illinois and Wisconsin Territory) with his master for 5 years
2. He sued for his freedom (after his master died) in 1846
3. The case went to the Supreme Court in 1857 (right after Buchanan became president)
 - a. It was ruled that black slaves were **not** citizens and therefore had no rights and could not sue in the Supreme Court
4. The Court also ruled that the Missouri Compromise, which had been repealed in 1854, was unconstitutional
5. Chief Justice Taney argued that because slaves were property, Congress could not forbid slavery in the territories without violating a slaveowner's constitutional right to own property
6. Two months after the Supreme Court's decision, Dred Scott's new master gave him freedom

IV. Lincoln vs. Douglas

A. The Race for the Illinois Senate Seat

1. **Lincoln:** self-educated; lawyer; former Whig
 - a. Republican; faced Douglas in the 1858 senatorial election
 - b. The debates helped Lincoln to become a well-known name

2. Lincoln said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*. I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved*—I do not expect the house to *fall*—but I *do* expect it will cease to be divided. It will become *all* one thing, or *all* the other. Either the *opponents* of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its *advocates* will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in *all* the States—*old* as well as *new*, *North* as well as *South*."

B. Freeport Doctrine (Famous Debate at Freeport, IL)

1. Debate over slavery in territories
2. Lincoln: what would happen if people in a territory voted slavery down?
 - a. Douglas's reply was called the **Freeport Doctrine**
 - i. He stated that the people of any territory could keep slavery out of that territory simply by refusing to pass local laws protecting it
3. Lincoln insisted that there was a fundamental difference between Douglas and himself
 - a. Douglas ignored the moral question of slavery, but Lincoln regarded slavery "as a moral, social, and political evil"
 - b. Douglas tried to depict Lincoln as a dangerous radical who favored racial equality

V. John Brown

A. Harpers Ferry

1. Brown believed he could invade the South and get the slaves to join him
2. He seized an arsenal at Harpers Ferry (VA) in 1859 and his plan failed—slaves were unaware of what he was trying to accomplish
3. Brown was convicted of murder and treason (hanged)
 - a. Southerners believed northerners sought to use slave revolts to destroy the South
 - b. Arguments erupted: was Brown a murdering abolitionist or were his actions justified?

VI. The Election of 1860

A. The Candidates

1. Democratic Party split

- a. **Northern Democrats:** Stephen Douglas
 - i. Favored popular sovereignty and the Fugitive Slave Law
- b. **Southern Democrats:** John Breckinridge
 - i. Favored the extension of slavery in the territories as well as in Cuba (which already had slavery)

2. Constitutional Union Party (made up of Whigs and Know-Nothings): John Bell

3. Republican: Lincoln

- a. The Republican platform extended beyond the slavery issue and appealed to many different groups:
 - i. Free-soilers: against the spread of slavery
 - ii. Northern manufacturers: a protective tariff
 - iii. Immigrants: increased rights

- iv. **Northwest: Pacific railroad**
- v. **West: internal improvements**
- vi. **Farmers: free homesteads/land**

B. Results

1. Lincoln won even though he was **not on the ballot in the South** (the split within the Democratic Party also helped him win)
2. Lincoln's victory gave South Carolina a reason to secede from the Union (remember, Buchanan still had 5 months left as president)
 - a. **7 states decided to secede (SC, AL, MS, FL, GA, LA, TX)**
 - b. Lame-duck President Buchanan did nothing to stop these states
 - c. **Jefferson Davis** became the head of the Confederate States of America

C. The Crittenden Compromise (December 1860)

1. Proposed by Senator John Crittenden of KY to prevent the Southern states from leaving the Union
 - a. Gave protection to territories south of the 36° 30'—slavery **could** exist
 - b. Also suggested other amendments to the Constitution
2. Lincoln rejected these amendments
3. Next step....war