

**CHAPTER FOURTEEN: NOW THAT WE ARE FREE:  
RECONSTRUCTION AND THE NEW SOUTH, 1863–1890**

**READING AND STUDY GUIDE**

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  - B. Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan
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The Civil War ended in April 1865, concluding the bloodiest and most divisive conflict in American history. The period that followed came to be known as Reconstruction for several reasons. Most obviously, the name called to mind the need to rebuild the war torn South. It also referred to the effort to reestablish the Union torn apart by secession. Finally, it indicated the need to remake Southern society in the wake of slavery's destruction.

Americans entered the Reconstruction period facing the profound questions raised by war and emancipation. Was it possible for whites and former slaves to live together in peace and mutual respect? What rights were the freedmen entitled to and who would guarantee these rights? The different answers articulated by freedmen and white Southerners revealed sharply divergent visions of the future and led to a bitter struggle to define the meaning of freedom. "Verily," observed ex-slave Frederick Douglass, "the work does not end with the abolition of slavery, but only begins."

### **Learning Objectives**

After a careful examination of Chapter 14, students should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the South's response to defeat in 1865 and understand how southern whites and blacks differed in their perspectives on the post-Civil War South.
2. Identify and explain the role of the Freedmen's Bureau.
3. Discuss the nature of African American education as coordinated by the Freedmen's Bureau. Assess African American literacy rates in the South and comment on the Bureau's impact on improving literacy among African Americans. Describe white southern reaction to African American education during Reconstruction.
4. Comment on the extent of African American farm ownership in the South by the end of Reconstruction.
5. Explain the operation of the sharecropping system of labor and how it assisted southern whites in reasserting control over African American labor.
6. List the major motivations for African American migration to urban areas after the Civil War. Describe the living and working conditions of urban African Americans.
7. Discuss the role of African American churches in the political, social, and educational development of African Americans after the Civil War.
8. Explain the two major obstacles to federal implementation of a Reconstruction policy. Explain how the Ten Percent Plan and the Wade-Davis Bill intended to overcome these obstacles.
9. Outline the major provisions of Andrew Johnson's reconstruction plan. Comment on the Democratic, Republican, and conservative southern responses to Johnson's plan.

10. Explain the Reconstruction policy of the Radical Republicans and identify their leaders.
11. Explain the role of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 in the transition from presidential to Congressional reconstruction.
12. Outline the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment and explain its impact on the founding of the American Equal Rights Association.
13. Explain the provisions of the Tenure of Office Act and its connection to the impeachment of Andrew Johnson.
14. Explain the provisions of the Fifteenth Amendment and its impact on the women's suffrage movement.
15. Identify the three major Republican constituencies who supported radical state governments in the South during Reconstruction.
16. Discuss the nature of African American Republican political leadership during Radical Reconstruction.
17. Describe the activities of southern paramilitary groups in attempting to counter Reconstruction. Identify two pieces of congressional law that were designed to protect citizens from racial violence.
18. Identify the Liberal Republican branch of the Republican Party and explain its role in the presidential election of 1872.
19. Define the term *redemption* as it was used by southern conservatives to describe the end of Radical Reconstruction.
20. Describe the methods used by southern white organizations to regain control of southern state governments. Outline the provisions of the Civil Rights Acts of 1875 and assess their effectiveness in defending the civil rights of southern African Americans.
21. Describe the dispute in the presidential election of 1876. Outline the components of the Compromise of 1877 and comment on how the compromise resolved the disputed election.
22. Explain the long-term impact of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments as protections against racial discrimination.

### **Key Terms & Definitions:**

**Ten Percent Plan** Pardoned all Southerners (except high-ranking military officers and Confederate officials) who took an oath pledging loyalty to the Union and support for emancipation. As soon as ten percent of a state's voters took this oath, they could call a

convention, establish a new state government, and apply for congressional recognition. (408)

**Wade-Davis Bill** A Reconstruction program designed to punish Confederate leaders and permanently destroy the South's slave society. (408)

**Freedmen's Bureau** Relief agency for the war-ravaged South created by Congress in March 1865. It provided emergency services, built schools, and managed confiscated lands. (408)

**Black Codes** Laws designed by the ex-Confederate states to sharply limit the civil and economic rights of freedmen and create an exploitable workforce (413)

**Fourteenth Amendment** Drafted by Congress in June 1866, it defined citizenship to include African Americans, guaranteed equal protection before the law, and established the federal government as the guarantor of individual civil rights. (416)

**carpetbagger** White Southerners' derogatory term for Northerners who came south after the war to settle, work, or aid the ex-slaves. It falsely suggested they were penniless adventurers who came south merely to get rich. (418)

**scalawag** White Southerners' derogatory term for fellow whites considered traitors to their region and race for joining the Republican Party and cooperating with Reconstruction policy. (418)

**Fifteenth Amendment** Constitutional amendment passed by Congress in 1869 providing an explicit constitutional guarantee for black suffrage. (421)

**Ku Klux Klan** The best-known of the many secret white terrorist organizations that first arose in the South in 1866; they targeted freedmen and symbols of black self-improvement and independence and played a key role in reestablishing white supremacy by the late 1870s. (422)

**Panic of 1873** A financial panic on Wall Street that touched off a national economic recession causing financial houses, banks, and businesses to fail. Hundreds of thousands of workers lost their jobs. (424)

**Mississippi Plan** Campaign of violence and intimidation waged by armed groups of whites closely allied with the Democratic Party that drove Republicans from power in the Mississippi state elections of 1874. Copied by other Southern states. (426)

**Redeemers** Name for white Southern political leaders who successfully returned their states to white Democratic rule in the mid-1870s. The name was intended to depict these leaders as saviors of Southern society from rule by freedmen, scalawags, and carpetbaggers. (426)

**Civil Rights Act of 1875** Passed by Congress in 1875, it required state governments to provide equal access in public facilities such as schools and to allow African Americans to serve on juries. In 1883 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional. (426)

**Compromise of 1877** Resolution of the disputed presidential election of 1876 that handed victory to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes over Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. Democrats agreed to the deal in exchange for patronage and the continued removal of federal troops from the South. (427)

**New South** Optimistic phrase white Southerners used to describe the post-Reconstruction South, reflecting the South's development of a new system of race relations based on segregation and white supremacy and pointing to a profound economic transformation that swept across the region. (428)

### **Study Questions:**

How does this image reveal the uncertainty of race relations in the postwar South? (404)

How did freedmen define freedom in the Sea Islands? (406)

Why did Union officials define freedom for former slaves so narrowly in Louisiana? (407)

What advantages did Lincoln see in proposing a moderate Reconstruction policy? (408)

Why did freedmen believe they were owed land? (409)

Why did education become such a priority for African Americans? (410)

How did the black church become such a vital institution in freedmen communities? (411)

What was Andrew Johnson's primary motivation in devising his lenient Reconstruction policy? (412)

What events in the South in 1865 angered Northern Republicans? (413)

What is significant about the freedmen's use of the term citizen? (414)

How did Black Codes calling for freedmen to sign labor contracts curtail their freedom? (415)

Why did Republicans deem the Fourteenth Amendment necessary so soon after passing the Civil Rights Act? (416)

Why did moderate Republicans decide not to remove Johnson from office? (417)

What motivated Northerners to move south after the Civil War? (418)

What impact did African American voting have on the political situation in the South in 1867-1868? (419)

Why did Southerners charge that Reconstruction governments were corrupt? (420)

Why did some women's rights activists oppose ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment? (421)

What was the purpose behind anti-black violence waged by groups like the Klan? (422)

What impact did the scandals of the Grant administration have on Reconstruction? (423)

Why did Liberal Republicans lose faith in Reconstruction by the early 1870s? (424)

What makes political cartoons so popular and effective? (425)

What was the political impact of the resurgence of white vigilante violence? (426)

Why is the eventual result of the election of 1877 considered the end of Reconstruction? (427)

Who made up the political leadership of the New South? (428)

How was the Lost Cause a useful myth for Southerners? (429)

What weaknesses limited the successes of the New South economy? (430)

How did sharecropping provide a limited measure of independence to freedmen? (431)

What role did the black middle class play in the Jim Crow South? (432)

How did Southerners manage to undermine the Fifteenth Amendment? (433)

How did the U.S. Supreme Court play a role in the imposition of segregation? (434)

How did the poll tax and literacy test allow Southerners to circumvent the Fifteenth Amendment? (435)