Extended Notes:

Unit 3: Testing the New Nation

Period 5: 1840-1877

“The American Pageant” Chapter 22

Underlined terms indicate previous vocabulary; **bolded** terms indicate new vocabulary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Notes | Look here for extras! |
| With the Civil War over, plans had to be put in place to sew the country back together. The South had collapsed, economically, socially, even politically and physically. Once bustling capitals like Columbia and Richmond were now in ruins. Though these cities were rebuildable, the question remained if the entire South would be the same. Businesses and banks had closed. The agricultural land was now unusable. Any transportation system that had once existed in the South was in ruin much like its major cities. Much of the South’s overall wealth—some $2 billion in slaves—“had evaporated with emancipation.” The spirit of the South remained, although with a badly bruised ego.  Though arguably not the largest question to be dealt with, the most pressing issue of the early Reconstruction era was in regard to the future of a free African-American population. The Emancipation Proclamation was not as effective as many had thought it to be, with many resisting “emancipation more legalistically, stubbornly protesting that slavery was lawful until state legislature or the Supreme Court declared otherwise.” After emancipation had been fully forced on the South, many African-Americans took to the road. Some were looking to simply get away from the sites of their former bondage, while others sough out long-lost family members. The African-American family unit was strengthened by emancipation as many “slave marriages” were formalized and further lent themselves to larger African-American communities to give and receive support. In the first few years post-Reconstruction, some 25K African-Americans moved west into KS, becoming known as **exodusters**.  Religion became a main focus of African-American communities. “As slaves, [they] had worshipped alongside whites, but now they formed their own churches, pastored by their own ministers.” **Freedmen** were quick to set up other social institutions on their own. Land for schools was purchased, and teachers hired. “Learning to read and write had been a privilege generally denied to them under slavery,” but the supply of African-American teachers was lacking. While a supply of white teachers was offered by the American Missionary Association, it would take more than volunteers1 from charitable agencies to secure African-Americans’ place in the new social structure. The federal government would have to be involved.  The future facing African-Americans was uncertain. Many were unskilled and without property or money. The **Freedmen’s Bureau** was established in 1865 as a way to help in most of these areas. It provided “food, clothing, medical care, and education” but had mixed success. Its greatest accomplishments were in education, it quickly succumbed to corruption in other areas. The bureau was authorized to give seized Confederate land to freedmen, but little of this land made it to them as it was more apt to force them into signing labor contracts than hand over land.  The planning of Reconstruction was started by Lincoln before the war had even ended. While not exactly sympathetic to the South, Lincoln, who never formally acknowledged secession, felt that restoring the Union would be pretty straightforward. He was quick to introduce his **Ten Percent Plan** in 1863. The plan stated that when ten percent of a state’s 1860 voting population took an oath of allegiance to the US and recognized the legitimacy of emancipation, that state would be welcomed back. Congress had other ideas. They passed in 1864 the **Wade-Davis Bill**, which upped the proposed percentage to 50% and called for stricter safeguards on emancipation. Lincoln refused to sign the bill and Congress refused to seat the reorganized LA government in response.  A large portion of the Republican Congress was very moderate, agreeing that the Southern states should be reintegrated into the Union quickly. However, they felt it should be on the Congress’ terms rather than the president’s. The minority of Republicans believed the South should atone for their sins first. They wanted the South to be reconstructed in its entirety—its social structure uprooted and replanted, all Confederates punished harshly, and government protection of emancipated African-Americans. These “radical” Republicans were not happy with Lincoln’s assassination, but felt more things would go their way with Andrew Johnson in charge.2 Johnson had misled the Congress into thinking he had agreed with them; he recognized Lincoln’s “Ten Percent” governments, and issue his own plan for Reconstruction which has much in common with Lincoln’s. If states followed Johnson’s plan, they would be readmitted to the Union.  States in the South began reorganizing their governments to gain recognition. While most met Johnson’s requirements, they also instituted **Black Codes**, which sought to regulate the lives of African-Americans and resembled the initial codes of the late 1700s. Their ultimate aim was “to ensure a stable and subservient labor force. The crushed Cotton Kingdom could not rise from its weeds until the fields were once again put under hoe and plow.” Punishment for breaking the codes resulted in slavery-like penalties, and it seemed like antebellum race relations would be more difficult to battle than the institution of slavery.3 “Freedom was legally recognized, as were some other privileges, such as the right to marry” but forbid African-Americans from serving on juries, renting or leasing land, and voting. In some areas, “idleness” was a crime, punishable by forced labor on a chain-gang. “The oppressive laws mocked the ideal of freedom so recently purchased by buckets of blood,” and while the most irrational pieces would be repealed, their purpose would ultimately be served. African-Americans would be kept away from economic independence and forced to sell their labor to former masters or sucked into the fitful life of a sharecropper.4  Congress felt the need to take over the planning of Reconstruction as many of the Southern delegations that were sent to represent their states were filled with Democrat ex-Confederate leaders. “Voters of the South had turned instinctively to their experienced statesmen [however] most were tainted by active association with the ‘lost cause’.” Congressional Republicans were not excited to welcome back their enemies—Confederate, Democrat, or otherwise. The Republican Congress had enjoyed little competition over the last few years, and had used it to pass a multitude of laws that favored the North including the Homestead Act of 1862 and the **Pacifica Railroad Act**. Even though they would face competition in the future, it was baffling to think that “a restored South would be stronger than ever in national politics” since the Three-Fifths Clause would no longer apply, increasing the population of the South by default. The last straw for Congress was when the president vetoed a bill extending the existence of the Freedmen’s Bureau.  Soon after Johnson’s veto, the Congress passed the **Civil Rights Bill** in 1866, which took aim at the Black Codes and granted citizenship to African-Americans. Johnson vetoed this bill too. Congress managed to override this veto, and subsequent others. They felt the need to make sure their work stayed in place, proposing constitutional amendments that would outlast them and any chance of Southern/Democrat repeals. If passed, this amendment would join the **Thirteenth Amendment** in protecting African-Americans. The **Fourteenth Amendment** was ratified by the states in 1868 and made three provisions for the near- and distant-futures. First, it redefined citizenship to include African-Americans, without explicitly guaranteeing them voting rights. Despite this, it would reduce representation in Congress if a state denied African-Americans the right to vote, but again, does not provide constitutional protection of their voting rights. Finally, it stated that all Confederate officials were disqualified from holding public office. As they sent the amendment out to the states, Congress made its ratification a requirement for being readmitted to the Union. Southern state delegations were sent back to their states to be reformed, while President Johnson advised them not to ratify the amendment.  Congressional Reconstruction continued under the guise of trying to compromise the moderate and radical Republican trains of thought. Moderate Republicans wanted to hold fast to aspects of states’ rights and self-government while the radical Republicans preferred policies that heavily regulated the South by involving the federal government in their everyday lives. The **Reconstruction Act** split the South into different military zones to be controlled by Union generals while suspending the right to vote for former Confederates. Congress’ plan also put forth new requirements for readmission, including ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment and the right to vote for African-American males. This was further safeguarded by the **Fifteenth Amendment**. Congress’ military-based Reconstruction “usurped certain functions of the president” and kept the Supreme Court on their toes; the Court had ruled in ***Ex parte Milligan*** that military courts could not try citizens, even in times of war, as long as civilian courts remained open.  Much of the South proceeded to draft new state constitutions, with all of them gaining readmission by 1870. This did not mean that Union troops left the area. Instead they stayed until the new state governments seemed firmly in place. This was a great show put on by much of the South though, who upon the departure of the soldiers placed their governments in the hands of their supported Democrats for home-rule, known to them as **Redeemers**. The new solid Democratic South was soldier-free by 1877.  With the right to vote granted to them, African-American males wasted no time in organizing politically. The **Union League** became a way to educate the population about civic duties and candidates. The League took on many responsibilities of the Freedmen’s Bureau in terms of “representing black grievances before local employers and government” and protecting African-American communities from any white retaliation. Many of the African-American politicians elected to office helped with state constitutions, and being further elected to Congress. The new Reconstruction governments that included African-American representatives passed some much-needed reforms, including streamlined taxes, improved school systems, and property rights for women.  Many of the bitterest white Southerners criticized the new governments, especially those that included African-Americans. They called the white allies of these new politicians **scalawags** and **carpetbaggers**. Whereas the scalawags were often Southern former-Whigs, the carpetbaggers were Northern businessmen and professionals who had moved South to either “play a role in modernizing the ‘New South’” or “seek personal power and profit.” Secret organizations also sprung up, including the **Ku Klux Klan**, who use scare tactics, violence, and other forms of terrorism to show their distrust and distaste for minority groups. In the 1870s, they used various measures to ensure “upstart” African-Americans and their allies were “’kept in their place’—that is, down.” In response, Congress passed the **Force Acts of 1870 and 1871**, though attempts to undermine African-Americans politically continued under the facades of more prim and proper clubs and voter requirements.5  With the amount of government effort put into securing civil rights for African-Americans, little thought was granted to the women’s movement. Much of the momentum gained by this movement before the war had been redirected by those involved toward the abolitionist cause. The women’s movement “had often pointed out that both women and blacks lacked basic civil rights, especially the crucial right to vote.” With the war over, and the Reconstruction amendments passed, many participants in the women’s movement were stunned to see these amendments continue to protect rights for men.6  Fed up with Johnson, Congress decided to remove him from office. Their first step was to pass the **Tenure of Office Act** in 1867, which stated the president needed the approval of the Senate before he could remove a member of his cabinet. Johnson vetoed the proposal, and Congress overrode it. This was to keep Johnson’s Secretary of War, a holdover from Lincoln and informer for the radical Republicans, in place. When Johnson dismissed this Secretary of War in 1868, it gave the House of Representatives a reason to begin the impeachment process. Johnson had technically broken the Tenure of Office Act7, which the House felt covered the “high crimes and misdemeanors” portion of causes for impeachment as listed in the Constitution, and also included his “verbal assaults on the Congress, involving ‘disgrace, ridicule, hatred, contempt, and reproach.’” With the Senate set to preside over the trial, the House had some difficulties “building a compelling case for impeachment.” A majority for the president’s removal could not be found, and he was declared “not guilty.”8 The Senate was conflicted in all corners or the proceedings; they would be setting a Congressional precedent of abusing the Constitution, as well as checks and balances, and they *hated* the guy who would have succeeded to the presidency. “Johnson was clearly guilty of bad speeches, and bad temper, but not of ‘high crimes and misdemeanors” as set forth by the Constitution.  Johnson’s greatest success as president came in 1867, with the purchase of Alaska. Russia was looking to sell its piece of frozen wilderness9 in North America, and preferred the US to any other power who might purchase it. Secretary of State William Seward signed a treaty for the purchase of Alaska in 1867 for $7.2M. While Seward was excited as an ardent expansionist to sign the papers, much of the country did not share in his joy, naming the effort **Seward’s Folly**. | The primary focus of this chapter is Reconstruction—the process of bringing the South back into the Union and “reconstructing” its political, economic, and social structures.  PRIMARY QUESTIONS OF RECONSTRUCTION:   * How would the South be rebuilt? * How would the newly-liberated African-Americans fare as free men and women? * How was the South to be reintegrated with the greater US? * Who would oversee the Reconstruction process; the states, the Congress, or the President?   **Exodusters:** African-American farmers who made their way west in the early post-Reconstruction era.  **Freedmen:**  the name given to freed African-Americans after the Civil War.  1. Most of the volunteers would be white women.  **Freedmen’s Bureau (1865-1872):** created to aid newly emancipated African-Americans by providing food, clothing, medical care, education, and legal support; its achievements were uneven and depended largely on the quality of local administrators.  **Ten Percent Reconstruction Plan (1863):** proposal from Lincoln that a state be readmitted to the Union once ten percent of its voters had pledged loyalty to the US and promised to honor emancipation.  **Wade-Davis Bill:** passed by Congress as a counter to the Ten Percent Plan as it required fifty percent of a state’s voters to pledge allegiance to the US and set stronger safeguards for emancipation; reflected the division between Congress and the President as well as between moderate Republicans and radical Republicans.  2. Johnson was from TN and had resented the South for secession. This led Congress to believe he would agree with their plans for Reconstruction rather than Lincoln’s. Johnson’s plan for Reconstruction was in place from 1865 to 1866.  **Black Codes (1865-1866):** laws passed throughout the South to restrict the rights of emancipated African-Americans, particularly with respect to labor contracts and related negotiations.  (Dates from the book; “Black Codes” would never really go away until the 1960s-70s, they would just take on new names.)  3. President Johnson, along with much of the North, shared in Southern thinking regarding the inferiority of African-Americans, free or not. Johnson was very lenient in Reconstruction, according to the Congress, and his allowance of the Black Codes reflected that.  4. VERY old vocab term, like Bacon’s Rebellion old….  **Pacific Railroad Act (1862):** helped fund the construction of the Pacific Union transcontinental railroad with the use of land grants and government bonds.  **Civil Rights Bill (1866):** aimed to counterattack Black Codes by conferring citizenship on African-Americans and making it a crime to deprive them of their rights to sue, testify in court, or hold property.  **Thirteenth Amendment (1865):** prohibits all forms of slavery (except as punishment for a crime); former Confederate states were required to ratify this amendment as part of their readmittance to the US.  **Fourteenth Amendment (1868):** extended civil rights freedmen and prohibited states from taking away such rights without due process; also prevents former Confederates from holding public office.  **Reconstruction Act (1867):** divided the South into military districts, disenfranchised former Confederates, and required Southern states both ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and write state constitutions guaranteeing freedmen the right to vote before gaining admission to the Union.  **Fifteenth Amendment (1870):** prohibits states from denying anyone the right to vote based on race.  ***Ex parte Milligan* (1866):** Supreme Court ruling that stated military tribunals could not be used to try civilians if other courts were open.  **Redeemers:** Southern Democratic politicians who sought to take control back from Republican regimes established during and after Reconstruction.  **Union League:** Reconstruction-era African-American organization that worked to educate about civic life, built schools and churches, and represented African-American interests before government and employers, as well as campaigned on behalf of Republican candidates and recruited local militias to protect African-American communities from white retaliation.  **Scalawags:** derogatory term for pro-Union Southerners whom Southern Democrats accused of plundering the resources of the South in collusion with Republican governments after the Civil War.  **Carpetbaggers:** term used by Southern whites to describe Northern politicians and businessmen who came to the South after the Civil War to work on Reconstruction projects or invest in Southern infrastructure.  **Ku Klux Klan:** extremist paramilitary group/secret society founded in the 19th Century, with a revival in the 1920s, which still exists to terrorize minority groups and other with their antiforeign, anti-African-American, anti-Jewish, antipacifist, and other views.  **Force Acts (1870-1871):** passed by Congress following a wave of Klan violence, the acts banned membership from these groups, prohibited the use of intimidation to prevent African-Americans from voting, and gave the US military the authority to enforce these acts.  5. These secret societies still met (obviously), they just used different names in public: dance groups, bridge clubs, etc. Voter requirements often included literacy tests and the infamous “grandfather clause” in which a voter was asked to prove their grandfather was born in the US before he was able to actually vote.  6. Many women at the time felt that they were fighting alongside African-Americans for a similar, if not the same, cause. With the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment they felt betrayed; they had fought just as much for the war’s end and their own right to vote.  **Tenure of Office Act (1867):** required the president to seek approval from the Senate before removing appointees; used as cause for impeachment against Andrew Jackson when he removed his Secretary of War in 1868.  7. Johnson maintained that he had violated the act to force the Supreme Court in deciding its constitutionality. The Supreme Court would make a decision on the act in *Myers v. US* (1926), in which they invalidated it.  8. This means that while accusations were brought against Johnson, he was never fully impeached.  **Seward’s Folly (1867):** popular term for Secretary of State William H. Seward’s purchase of Alaska from Russia.  9. As the legend goes, a new dessert was invented to “celebrate” the purchase. It’s called the Baked Alaska. |