

ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

The Democratic Party in the Civil War

By Al Ronzoni Jr.

As Congress neared adjournment on the sultry evening of Saturday August 8, 1846, David Wilmot, a first term Democratic congressman from Pennsylvania, rose during a debate on an appropriations bill for the Mexican War and proposed an amendment prohibiting slavery in any of the new territories acquired from Mexico. There was more to this “Wilmot Proviso” than met the eye. Wilmot and allies who supported the amendment had genuine anti-slavery convictions, but were also acting on behalf of a faction of northern Democrats who were angry with President James Knox Polk and fed up with southern domination of the party. Their grievances went back to 1844 when southerners had denied former president Martin Van Buren a third nomination for the office because he refused to endorse the annexation of Texas, resulting in the nomination of Polk, a virtually unknown Tennessean, instead. The Polk administration then made sure that patronage in Van Buren’s home state of New York had gone to anti-Van-Buren “Hunkers” (a term derived from “hankers” as in one who hankers to gain a political office). Pennsylvania Democrats were also embittered by the passage of the Walker Tariff by a Democratic-controlled Congress in 1846. The new tariff substantially reduced tax rates on imported goods, thereby opening up nascent Pennsylvania manufacturers to the threat of foreign (chiefly British) competition. Finally, the administration’s compromise on the 49th parallel as the boundary for the Oregon Territory incensed northern Democrats, many of who had chanted the slogan: “Fifty-four forty or fight!”

The Wilmot Proviso drove northern Democrats into a bipartisan coalition with northern Whigs that was able to pass the amendment in the House of Representatives twice, though it was never able to pass in the Senate where the South had greater representation. Previously, the normal pattern of division in Congress had occurred along party lines on issues such as the tariff, the Bank of the United States and federal spending on “internal improvements” such as bridge, road and canal building. The Wilmot Proviso wrenched this division of parties into a conflict between the North and South. The political landscape had been irrevocably altered. “As if by magic,” commented the Boston Whig on August 15, 1846, “it brought to a head the great question which is about to divide the American people.”¹

¹ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 54.

As the presidential election of 1848 neared, both the Whigs and Democrats tried to heal the sectional rifts within their ranks. One possible solution was to extend the Missouri Compromise line that in 1820 prohibited slavery in the territories of the Louisiana Purchase above the latitude of 36° 30' with the state of Missouri, admitted to the Union in 1821, being the sole exception.

Another idea generated by election-year politics was what would come to be known as “popular sovereignty.” It was identified mainly with Michigan’s Senator Lewis Cass, the chief rival of Secretary of State James Buchanan for the Democratic presidential nomination (exhausted from his years in office and ill, Polk chose not to run for re-election and died only three months after leaving office). Cass maintained that settlers in the territories were as capable of self-government as citizens of states. Therefore, why not let them decide for themselves whether or not to have slavery. The idea had the political appeal of ambiguity, for Cass did not specify whether voters would make the choice during the territorial stage or later when adopting a state constitution, but enough southerners saw merit in the proposal to win Cass the nomination.

The Whigs nominated General Zachary Taylor, a hero of the Mexican War, who had earned the nickname of “Old Rough and Ready” for his unkempt hair, casual style of military dress and behaviour as a leader. Taylor’s ownership of slave plantations in both Louisiana and Mississippi made him popular with southerners, who assumed he would represent their interests. Other than promoting Taylor, who had helped to win a war most of them opposed, the Whigs offered little in the way of a platform, trying their best to keep the issue of slavery under wraps.

But Taylor’s candidacy still brought to a head a long-festering schism in northern Whiggery. Speaking for a faction of the party known as “Conscience Whigs,” Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner wrote: “We cannot support anybody who is not known to be against the extension of slavery.” Opposing the Conscience Whigs were “Cotton Whigs,” whose ranks included textile magnates more concerned with uniting with their southern brethren to bring Taylor to victory. Unable to sanction the alliance of “lords of the loom” and “lords of the lash,” Conscience Whigs soon left the party. Their purpose in Sumner’s words was no less than “a new crystallization of parties, in which there shall be one grand Northern party of Freedom.”²

The time appeared right for such a movement. In New York the Van Buren faction of the Democrats dubbed “Barnburners” (for the legend of a Dutch farmer who had burned his barn down to rid it of rats) first bolted the party to hold their own conclave to nominate Van Buren on a platform supporting the Wilmot Proviso, but then joined forces with the abolitionist Liberty Party to form the Free Soil Party, which also accepted Van Buren as its nominee. Despite the powerful mantra of, “Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor and Free Men,” the Free Soilers only captured about ten percent of the vote, but they were a harbinger of things to come.

² Ibid., 60, Sumner to Salmon P. Chase, February 7, 1848.

Taylor won the election decisively, but soon revealed himself as pro-Wilmot Proviso too, despite the fact that he owned slaves himself. Like a good military strategist, he planned to outflank the opposition and break the slavery stalemate once and for all by proposing to allow California and New Mexico to bypass the territorial stage and become directly admitted as states, which would create two more free states. The South was outraged. Several fistfights broke out between southerners and northerners on the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate; Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi challenged a colleague to a duel and Senator Henry Stuart Foote (also of Mississippi) drew a loaded revolver during a heated debate. There was even talk that the South might secede from the Union.

The possible breakup of the nation was forestalled by the Compromise of 1850, which admitted California as a free state but organized the new territories of New Mexico and Utah without restrictions on slavery. In addition, it abolished the slave trade in the District of Columbia, though not slavery itself, and also offered the South the promise of a stronger fugitive slave law.

President Taylor died in July 1850 after only a little more than a year in office. He was succeeded by Millard Fillmore, a New York Whig who tilted almost as far towards the interests of the South as southerner Taylor had tilted towards those of the North. Fillmore was relentless in enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which gave the federal government more power than any legislation yet passed by Congress. Now it was the northerners who turned angry and violent, several times interfering with federal marshals' attempts to return recaptured slaves to their owners with at least one incident in Pennsylvania turning into a pitched battle. In the North, no aspect of the Compromise had more far-reaching consequences.³ But even more arousing to northern militancy was the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in May 1854, described by historian James McPherson as perhaps the single most important event that pushed the United States towards Civil War. The Act arose out of the desire of farmers and land speculators to exploit the fertile soil of the Kansas and Platte river valleys. Entrepreneurs and politicians also dreamed of a transcontinental railroad through the region. One of them was an Illinois Democratic Senator, Stephen A. Douglas, who became a prime sponsor of the bills to organize Kansas and Nebraska as U.S. Territories, so they could form governments and be officially settled. Douglas needed the support of at least half a dozen southern colleagues in order to get anything passed and they made clear what it was going to cost: the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. So, he took the fateful step of adding an explicit repeal on the ban on slavery north of 36° 30'. In order to justify his actions Douglas resurrected Lewis Cass's idea of "popular sovereignty" or the idea that the people of the Kansas-Nebraska territories should have the right to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted slavery. The majority of Northerners, who were opposed to the expansion of slavery, were shocked by the implications of such a position. If people in the territories were free to make this choice might that not open the door to

³ Fergus M. Bordewich, *America's Great Debate: Henry Clay, Stephen A. Douglas and the Compromise of 1850* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012), 361.

allowing people to make the same decision anywhere and perhaps converting the entire United States into a slave-holding nation?

Abraham Lincoln, an Illinois Whig, who had largely retired from public life since leaving his congressional seat six years earlier, wrote that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise included in the Kansas-Nebraska Act had “aroused him as he had never been [aroused] before.” Lincoln soon took the stump on behalf of “anti-Nebraska” candidates for the legislature in the hope that their victory would create a majority that would elect him to the U.S. Senate (Senators were elected by state legislatures until the passage of the 17th Amendment in 1913). Lincoln and Douglas confronted each other on the same platform in speeches at Springfield and Peoria in October 1854. In these addresses Lincoln set forth the foundation of the platform that would carry him into the presidency six years later.⁴

Lincoln contended that the founding fathers had opposed slavery because they had adopted a Declaration of Independence that pronounced that all men were created equal, banned slavery from the vast Northwest Territory in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and prohibited the African slave trade in 1807. That was why the Constitution did not mention the words ‘slave’ or ‘slavery’. “Thus the thing is hid away in the Constitution,” said Lincoln, “just as an afflicted man hides away a ... cancer, which he dares not cut out at once, lest he bleed to death...”⁵

A majority of northern voters agreed with him and expressed it in the 1854 elections. The elections were a slap to the Democrats and their doctrine of popular sovereignty. While in 1852 they carried all but two northern states, in 1854 the opposite occurred, they lost all but two northern states. The number of northern Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives decreased from 93 to 23; they were now vastly outnumbered by their 58 southern Democratic colleagues.

A good deal of this repudiation of the Democrats also had to do with a brief rise in nativist politics engendered by immigration levels in the early 1850s that were five times higher than those of the previous decade. Most of the new arrivals were poor Catholic peasants or laborers from Ireland and Germany who crowded into large cities and became loyal foot soldiers for Democratic Party machines that helped many find jobs and housing. This created a reaction on the part of “native Americans,” many of whom were actually Protestant English or Scotch-Irish, only a generation or two removed from immigration themselves. But the inevitable rise in crime and competition for employment caused by this rapid urban population increase led to the creation of the American Party, also known as the “Know Nothings”, because, supposedly, when members were asked about its activities they responded, “I know nothing.” The Know Nothings’ main issue

⁴ Roy P. Basler et al., eds., “Autobiography written for John Locke Scripps”, ca June 1860, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 8 vols. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953-55), 4:67.

⁵ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 127.

was the reduction of the influence of the Catholic newcomers in American politics, but they also favored moderation in the use of alcohol, opposed tax support for parochial schools, and, in the North, opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act as well.

But the real future of the two-party system in American politics lay in the formation of “anti-Nebraska” coalitions of northern Whigs and Democrats which soon gave birth to another new organization that called itself “Republican”, a label that still had strong resonance. These latter-day Republicans identified not so much with the states’ rights ideology of Thomas Jefferson as with the struggles of the American Revolution against the aristocracy and unearned privilege they now saw as exemplified by the slave lords of the South. As immigration levels began to taper off dramatically in the mid-1850s, and the expansion of slavery into the territories became the overriding issue for northerners, the Republican Party surged in less than two years to displace the Know Nothings, who had, like the Whigs, also split along sectional lines over the issue of slavery, and become the majority party in the North.

Meanwhile, many Democrats were becoming increasingly pro-southern and racist, castigating their opponents as “Black Republicans” and alleging that their real goal was interracial marriage and mixed offspring. By 1860 the country was so split along regional lines that there was a four-way race for the presidency. Abraham Lincoln was the nominee of the exclusively northern Republican Party. Stephen A. Douglas ran as the candidate of northern Democrats, John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky as a southern Democrat and John C. Bell of Tennessee as the choice of the Constitutional Union Party, a coalition of conservative former Whigs and Know Nothings who could not stomach either the Democrats or Republicans. But the strength of the new Republican Party allowed Lincoln to carry all of the northern states in addition to California and Oregon. An American president had been elected without the support of a single southern state.

For most southerners, even the majority who owned no slaves, the reality of this new power equation and the idea of a “Black Republican” president were the final straws. Seven southern states officially seceded from the Union, forming the Confederate States of America (CSA), before Lincoln was even inaugurated on March 4, 1861. Authorities of the CSA soon began to seize U.S. forts and other military installations all over the South. One of the last holdouts was Fort Sumter, which dominated the entrance to Charleston Harbor in South Carolina, the first state to secede.

In January 1861 President James Buchanan sent an unarmed merchant ship to attempt to provision Sumter but it was fired on by the South Carolinians. After only a month in office Lincoln faced the same decision only more imminently; either re-supply Sumter or let it fall to the Confederates. U.S. General-in-Chief Winfield Scott advised that Sumter should be abandoned because it was impossible to re-supply, while Secretary of State William Henry Seward thought it might help to cool relations with the South. But perhaps sensing the inevitability of war and desirous that the Confederacy be seen as having fired the first shot, Lincoln ordered a flotilla of merchant vessels escorted by the U.S. Navy to Charleston. The Confederate government then ordered the bombardment of

Fort Sumter in a successful attempt to force its surrender before the relief force could arrive. Only Secretary of State Robert Toombs objected to the decision, supposedly telling President Jefferson Davis: “You will only strike the hornet’s nest...Legions now quiet will swarm out and sting us to death. It is unnecessary. It puts us in the wrong. It is fatal.”⁶

Toombs was right. Passions were inflamed on both sides by the assault on Fort Sumter. Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion, which led four more southern states to secede from the Union. America was now at war, with itself. Most Democrats were now also either Confederates or varying degrees of southern sympathizers. A rump party still survived in the now Republican dominated North. Would it survive the conflagration?

During the war the Democratic Party did survive in the North because of its strength in the cities, especially among the working class and immigrant groups like the Irish, who often felt they had no real stake in supporting the Republicans’ war against the South. Others saw Lincoln and the Republicans as a threat to constitutional government and civil liberties. Though Lincoln won New York State’s 35 electoral votes in 1860, he failed to carry a single precinct in either New York City or the territory that now comprises Nassau County. In January of 1861, while Lincoln was still waiting to be inaugurated, New York’s Democratic Mayor, Fernando Wood proposed that the city secede from the Union. The suggestion was more than a little self-serving because Wood had made his fortune as a shipping merchant and depended on the cotton trade with the South to maintain a personal political machine that rivalled Tammany Hall. Democrats calling for an immediate peace settlement with the Confederacy were branded “Copperheads” by Republicans after the poisonous snake of the same name. Peace Democrats gladly accepted the label, cutting out the likeness of lady liberty from copper pennies to wear as badges of pride. The acknowledged leader of the Copperheads was a congressman from Ohio, Clement Laird Vallandigham. On May 1, 1863, he delivered an address charging that the war was being fought not to save the Union but rather to free the slaves by sacrificing the liberties of all Americans to “King Lincoln.” He also called for the president’s removal from office. For these efforts Vallandigham was arrested for violating an order promulgated by General Ambrose Burnside, commander of the Military Department of Ohio, prohibiting “declaring sympathies for the enemy.” He was further denied a writ of habeas corpus, convicted by a military tribunal and sentenced to two years confinement in a military prison. However, not wishing to make Vallandigham a martyr, Lincoln ordered his sentence set aside and had the Ohioan banished to the Confederacy.⁷

⁶ Mark Scroggins, *Robert Toombs: The Civil Wars of a United States Senator and Confederate General* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011), 134.

⁷ “General Orders, No. 38 (DOO).” in *Ohio Civil War Central*, retrieved February 15, 2015 from <http://www.ohiocivilwarcentral.com/entry.php?rec=104>

But by no means were all northern Democrats Copperheads. Among the staunchest supporters of both the Union and the war were Democrats Edwin McMasters Stanton, Secretary of War and former Tennessee governor and U.S. senator Andrew Johnson, picked to be Lincoln's running mate in the 1864 presidential election. This was also the period that saw the political split in New York's prominent Roosevelt family. The Manhattan-based branch of the family that sired Teddy joined the Republicans, while the more conservative Hyde Park Roosevelts remained Democrats of the pro-Union stripe.

The country had not re-elected an incumbent President since Andrew Jackson in 1832—nine Presidents in a row had served just one term. A solid swath of Northern states from the Mississippi to the Atlantic that had gone for Lincoln in 1860 defected to the Democrats in the midterm elections of 1862. The same outcome in 1860 would have beaten Lincoln 127 electoral votes to 86. The most important race of 1862 had been in New York, the biggest state in the Union, where Democrat, Horatio Seymour had beaten Republican, James Samuel Wadsworth by nearly eleven thousand votes. New York Democrats had also elected a majority delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives. The Democrats had won only two of the six governorships of for grabs, Seymour in New York and Joel Parker in New Jersey but a strong anti-administration tide had coursed through congressional races nearly everywhere.

More importantly, Lincoln was weakened by widespread criticism of his handling of the war. Despite Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg a year earlier, Southern armies came back fighting with a vengeance. During three months in the summer of 1864, over 65,000 Union soldiers were either killed, wounded, or missing-in-action. By comparison, there had been 108,000 Union casualties in the previous three years. General Ulysses S. Grant was being assailed as a "butcher." At one point during that summer, Confederate soldiers under Jubal Early came within five miles of the White House.

Lincoln's re-nomination and re-election were by no means assured, despite folk wisdom about the danger of "swapping horses in midstream." The fact that the nation was at war did not necessarily mean things would be any different in 1864. If the situation at the front was going badly, voters could punish the man in charge. And if he was not conducting affairs to the satisfaction of his party, he might not even be re-nominated. The Republican Party contained several men who in 1860 had considered themselves better qualified than Lincoln for the presidency. In 1864 at least one of them had still not changed his opinion: Treasury Secretary, Salmon Portland Chase.

Chase used his position at the Treasury Department to build a political machine for his nomination in 1864. The emergence of dissatisfaction with Lincoln's mild reconstruction policy strengthened his cause. In December 1863, a Chase committee took shape in Washington headed by Senator Samuel Clarke Pomeroy of Kansas. Misreading congressional grumbling for an anti-Lincoln groundswell, the committee decided to bring itself out into the open in February 1864. Pomeroy issued a "circular" declaring that Lincoln's "manifest tendency toward temporary expedients" should deny him a second

term and that Chase was the man to achieve the twin goals of a victorious war and just peace.⁸

This attempt to promote Chase as a Republican alternative backfired badly. The secretary proved to be no match for the president in the game of politics. While Chase had filled the Treasury Department with his partisans, Lincoln had not neglected patronage. Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair did inestimable service to president in this respect.

Although most Republicans climbed on board the Lincoln bandwagon, many did so with reluctance. As the reconstruction issue drove its wedge deeper into the party, several radicals continued to hold out for an alternative. New York Tribune editor, Horace Greeley futilely urged the postponement of the national convention from June to September in the hopes that something might turn up. Others launched trial balloons for Generals Ulysses S. Grant, Benjamin Butler and John C. Frémont, the adventurer and Mexican War hero who had served as the party's first presidential candidate in 1856. Of these Frémont's candidacy was the only one to gain any traction.

Frémont, like fellow military man, Major General George Brinton McClellan was bitter towards a president who had not assigned him an important command after relieving him from command as General in Chief of all Union armies. Of the two, McClellan posed the greater threat because it was presumed he would become the Democratic nominee later that summer. In the meantime, Frémont attracted a coalition of abolitionists and radical German-Americans to a third party. A few Republicans lent behind-the-scenes support in the hope that it would serve as a cat's paw to resuscitate Chase and deny Lincoln the nomination. But not a single prominent Republican showed up at the sparsely attended convention that met in Cleveland on May 31 to nominate Frémont.

During the second week of June, the Republican's quadrennial gathering took place in Baltimore amid the usual hoopla but the assemblage officially deemed itself the "National Union" convention to attract pro-war Democrats and southern unionists who might bristle at the name, "Republican." It nevertheless adopted a straightforward Republican platform, which included a call for the "unconditional surrender" of Confederate forces and a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery. Significantly, the platform dealt with the divisive issue of post-war reconstruction by ignoring it. Despite misgivings on the part of some, Lincoln achieved a unanimous nomination with comparatively little backroom dealing. Since the colorless incumbent vice-president, Hannibal Hamlin of Maine added no strength to the ticket, the search for a new second man on the ticket, providing the only real contest of the convention, began for a suitable War Democrat from a southern state. Former Tennessee governor, U.S. senator and

⁸ Margaret Wagner, Gary W. Gallagher and Paul Finkelman, eds., *The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2002), 36.

military governor of liberated Tennessee, Andrew Johnson fit the bill nicely. "Upon the progress of our arms," said Lincoln, "all else chiefly depends."⁹

Hopes for opponents of the Lincoln-Republican regime now turned to the Democratic convention scheduled to open in Chicago on July 4. Anticipating an attempt by the government or Republican agents provocateur to disrupt the gathering, Canadian-based Confederate plotters intended to fan any ensuing riot into a rebellion. But with their eyes on the uncertain military situation as much as Lincoln's, the Democratic National Committee postponed the convention until August 29. In the end nothing came of plans to foment revolution in the North because most mainstream Peace Democrats saw that their chances of overthrowing Lincoln by legitimate means seemed ever brighter as the weeks passed.

Further complicating matters was the influential but mercurial Greeley's attempt to broker peace. Greeley wrote to Lincoln in July bemoaning the "bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying" state of the nation and informed the president that two Confederate envoys were waiting on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls bearing a peace proposal from Jefferson Davis. Lincoln responded immediately, authorizing Greeley to bring to Washington under safe conduct "any person anywhere professing to have any proposition of Jefferson Davis in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union and abandonment of slavery." Of course the wily president knew perfectly well that Davis had not and could not authorize negotiations on any such conditions, so these initial efforts came to nothing. With Northern morale at a severely low ebb in the summer of 1864, Lincoln did almost succumb to casting aside the abolition of slavery as a condition of peace. On August 17, he drafted a letter to a War Democrat which concluded: "If Jefferson Davis...wishes to know what I would do if he were to offer peace and re-union, saying nothing about slavery, let him try me."¹⁰

Lincoln fully expected that George B. McClellan would be the next president. The latter was the most popular Democrat in the country and most powerful symbol of opposition to Lincoln's war policies. The only uncertainty concerned his position on a peace plank of the party platform to be submitted by Clement Vallandigham, who had snuck back into the United States under heavy disguise and had brazenly attended the Ohio State Democratic Convention in June. Although McClellan had endorsed a copperhead candidate for governor of his native Pennsylvania the previous year, he was widely known as a War Democrat and at a recent address at West Point had seemed to sanction a resolution of the conflict by military victory. This caused Peace Democrats to consider throwing their support to a rival but none materialized. Nevertheless, they would command close to half the delegates and might still jeopardize McClellan's chances by bolting the party if he was nominated. Behind the scenes, the general's key advisor moved to quickly to assure doubters that he preferred to restore the Union by peaceful means.

⁹ McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 718

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 766, 770

Doubts about McClellan's peace credentials persisted, the party nominated the general on a peace platform and chose Congressman George Hunt Pendleton of Ohio, a close ally of Vallandigham as his running mate.

From the day McClellan was nominated in Chicago he began to lose traction with a key constituency, the Union soldiers who had once endearingly referred to him as Little Mac. Their letters home began showing it. It was not the general, whom they still esteemed, who was turning them off. It was the company he was keeping. One colonel in the Army of the Potomac wrote to his wife: "The nomination of McClellan is not well received in the army, from the fact that they put that abominable traitor, Pendleton, on as Vice-President. The ticket has no chance here. McClellan's friends have abandoned him."

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The next crucial factor to the outcome of the election was the fall of Atlanta on September 2, 1864. The victory made an enormous contribution to both Northern and Republican morale, since there was now no longer any question that the Confederacy's days were numbered.

On Election Day, thousands of voters, often defying bad weather, streamed to the polls across the North and the lines were long at Union Army camps too. When the votes were all counted the president had achieved a stunning victory that would have seemed all but impossible just a few months earlier. The popular vote margin was 55 to 45%, giving Lincoln an electoral landslide of 212 to 21. McClellan won just three states: Kentucky, Delaware and his home state of New Jersey.

Lincoln's second inaugural address envisioned a kind-spirited reintegration of the South into the Union fold with: "Malice toward none and charity for all." But just a month and a half later he was gone and the new president a Southern Democrat, who shared Lincoln's conciliatory attitude towards the defeated Confederacy. The stage was set for a major showdown between Andrew Johnson and radical Republicans determined to see the former (male) slaves of the South guaranteed the vote and who sought nothing less than a wholesale transformation of the region's economy, social structure and culture of racism.¹²

In the coming years the fortunes of the Democratic Party as an institution were assured. They would achieve congressional majorities within 14 years of the end of the war (albeit briefly) almost elect their first president since James Buchanan in the disputed election of 1876 and finally take back the White House in 1885.

¹¹ Jack Waugh, *Reelecting Lincoln* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1997), 342.

¹² Second Inaugural Address of Abraham Lincoln, retrieved February 15, 2015 from http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln2.asp, accessed May 25, 2015.