**Reconstruction**
*(Chapter 8 Notes)*

**Reconstruction Begins**

- The president and Congress had to deal with Reconstruction, or rebuilding the South after the Civil War.
- They also had to decide under what terms and conditions the former Confederate states would rejoin the Union.
- President Lincoln’s **Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction** called for a general Amnesty, or pardon, to all Southerners who took an oath of loyalty to the United States and accepted the Union’s proclamations concerning slavery.
- After ten percent of the state’s voters in the 1860 presidential election had taken the oath, the state could organize a new state government.
- The **Radical Republicans** in Congress, led by Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, did not want to reconcile with the South.
- The Radical Republicans had three main goals.
  - They wanted to prevent the Confederate leaders from returning to power after the war.
  - They wanted the Republican Party to become powerful in the South.
  - They wanted the federal government to help African Americans achieve political equality by guaranteeing them the right to vote in the South.
- Moderate Republicans thought Lincoln’s plan was too lenient on the South and the Radical Republicans’ plan was too harsh.
- By the summer of 1864, the moderates and the radicals came up with a plan that they both could support.
- The **Wade-Davis Bill** was introduced and passed in Congress.
- The Wade-Davis Bill required the majority of adult white men in a former Confederate state to take an oath of allegiance to the Union.
- The state could then hold a constitutional convention to create a new state government.
- Each state’s convention would then have to abolish slavery, repudiate all debts the state had acquired as part of the Confederacy, and deprive any former Confederate government officials and military officers the right to vote or hold office.
- Lincoln thought the plan was too harsh, so he blocked the bill with a **pocket veto**.
- He did this by letting the session of Congress expire without signing the bill.
Thousands of freed African Americans, known as freedmen, had followed General Sherman and his troops as they marched through Georgia and South Carolina.

As a result the refugee crisis, Congress established the Freedmen’s Bureau.

This bureau was to feed and cloth war refugees in the South using army surplus supplies.

The bureau also tried to help freedmen find work and negotiate pay and hours worked on plantations.

Vice President Andrew Johnson issued a new Proclamation of Amnesty.

This plan offered to pardon all former citizens of the Confederacy who took an oath of loyalty to the Union and to return their property.

Excluded from the plan were all former Confederate officers and officials.

These people could individually ask the president for a pardon.

Johnson’s plan to restore the South to the Union included having each former Confederate state ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery.

The Southern states, for the most part, met Johnson’s conditions.

Johnson granted pardons to thousands of Southerners.

Many members of Congress were angry that several former Confederate officers and political leaders were elected to Congress.

Radical and moderate Republicans voted to reject these new members of Congress.

The new Southern state legislatures passed laws, known as black codes, that severely limited African Americans’ rights in the South.

The codes varied from state to state, but in general, they were written with the intention of keeping African Americans in conditions similar to slavery.

The black codes enraged Northerners.

What was President Andrew Johnson’s plan for restoring the South to the Union?

Johnson’s plan to restore the South to the Union offered a pardon to all former citizens of the Confederacy who took an oath of loyalty to the Union. His plan excluded Confederate officers and officials. His plan also included having each former Confederate state ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery.

Congressional Reconstruction

In late 1865, House and Senate Republicans created a Joint Committee on Reconstruction to develop their own program for rebuilding the Union.

In March 1866, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866.
- The act gave citizenship to all persons born in the United States, except Native Americans.
- It guaranteed the rights of African Americans to own property and be treated equally in court.
- It granted the U.S. government the right to sue people who violated these rights.
- The **Fourteenth Amendment** granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States.
- It said that no state could deprive any person of life, liberty, or property “without due process of laws.”
- No state could deny any person “equal protection of the laws.”
- Congress passed the amendment in June of 1866.
- It was sent to the states for ratification.
- The Fourteenth Amendment became the major issue in the congressional election of 1866.
- Johnson was against the amendment.
- He wanted Northern voters to elect a new majority in Congress that would support his plan for Reconstruction.
- Increased violence against African Americans and their supporters erupted in the South.
- The Republicans won a three-to-one majority in Congress.
- In March 1867, Congress passed the **Military Reconstruction Act**.
- This act did away with Johnson’s Reconstruction programs.
- The act divided the former Confederate states (except Tennessee because it had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment) into five military districts.
- A Union general was placed in charge of each district.
- Each former Confederate state had to hold another constitutional convention to write a constitution that Congress would accept.
- The Constitution had to give the right to vote to all adult male citizens.
- After the state ratified its new constitution, it had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment.
- Then the state could elect people to Congress.
- The Republicans feared that Johnson would veto their Reconstruction plan and interfere with their plans by refusing to enforce the Military Reconstruction Act.
- Congress passed the **Command of the Army Act** that required all orders from the president to go through the headquarters of the general of the army.
Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act that required Senate to approve the removal of any government official whose appointment had required the Senate’s approval.

On February 21, 1868, Johnson challenged the Tenure of Office Act by firing Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton.

Stanton supported the Congressional Reconstruction plan.

After Johnson fired Stanton, the House of Representatives voted to impeach Johnson.

They charged Johnson with breaking the law by refusing to uphold the Tenure of Office Act and with trying to undermine the Reconstruction program.

After more than two months of debate, the Senate vote was one vote short for conviction.

Johnson did not run for election in 1868.

General Ulysses S. Grant was the Republican candidate.

The presence of Union soldiers in the South helped African Americans vote in large numbers.

Grant easily won the election.

Republicans kept majorities in both houses of Congress.

The Republican-led Congress proposed the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

This amendment said that the right to vote could not be denied on account of race, color, or previous servitude.

This amendment became part of the Constitution in 1870.

How did Radical Reconstruction affect the South?

- It changed Southern politics by bringing hundreds of thousands of African Americans into the political process for the first time. It began to change the Southern Society.

Reconstruction and Republican Rule

- By 1870 all former Confederate states had rejoined the Union.
- During Reconstruction, many Northerners moved to the South.
- Many were elected or appointed to positions in the state governments.
- Southerners referred to these Northerners as carpetbaggers because some brought suitcases made of carpet fabric.
- Many southerners viewed the Northerners as intruders who wanted to gain from the South’s postwar troubles.
Southerners also disliked scalawags—white Southerners who worked with the Republicans and supported Reconstruction.

Thousands of formerly enslaved people took part in governing the South.

They were delegates to state conventions, local officials, and state and federal legislators.

Many formerly enslaved African Americans attended schools in the South during Reconstruction.

By 1876 about 40 percent of all African American children attended school in the region.

African American established churches, which served as the center of many African American communities.

The Republican Party became powerful in the South and started many major reforms.

The reforms included repealing the black codes, establishing state hospitals, and rebuilding roads and railways damaged during the Civil War.

To pay for Republican reforms, many Southern state governments borrowed money and imposed high property taxes.

Many Southern whites resented African Americans and the Republican-ruled governments.

Some Southerners organized secret societies such as the Ku Klux Klan to undermine the Republican Rule.

Klan members terrorized supporters of the Republican governments, including African Americans, white Republicans, carpetbaggers, teachers in African American schools, and others who supported the Republican governments and equality for African Americans.

In 1870 and 1871, Congress passed three Enforcement Acts to end the violence in the South, one of which made the activities of the Ku Klux Klan illegal.

Critics attacked Grant’s economic policies, saying that the policies benefited wealthy Americans at the expense of the poor.

Liberal Republicans agreed with the Democrats and left the Republican Party in 1872.

The Liberal Republicans and the Democratic Party nominated the influential newspaper publisher Horace Greeley for president.

Grant, the Republican candidate, won the election of 1872.

Grant’s second term of office was badly hurt by a series of scandals.

The Panic of 1873 caused many smaller banks to close and the stock market to fall.

The panic led to a depression that lasted until the end of the decade.

In 1874 Democrats won control of the House of Representatives and gained seats in the Senate.
What two factors hurt the Republican Party during Grant’s administration?

- The Scandals in the Grant administration and the deepening economic depression hurt the Republican Party.

Reconstruction Ends

- During the 1870s, Democrats worked to gain control of state and local governments from the Republicans.
- Southern Democrats defined the elections as a struggle between whites and African Americans.
- By 1876 the Democrats had control of most Southern state legislatures.
- The Republican candidate in the election of 1876 was Rutherford B. Hayes.
- Hayes wanted to end Radical Reconstruction.
- The Democratic candidate was Samuel Tilden, the former governor of New York.
- Neither candidate won a majority of electoral votes.
- There was so much election fraud that it was hard to tell who had won.
- Congress worked out the Compromise of 1877, in which Hayes became president.
- It is believed that to get Southern Democrats in Congress to agree to Hayes as president, the compromise included the promise by the Republicans to pull federal troops out of the South.
- Hayes pulled federal troops out of the South.
- This ended Republican governments and Reconstruction in the South.
- President Hayes wanted a “New South” with a strong industrial economy.
- An alliance between Southerners and Northern financiers brought great economic changes to parts of the South.
- Capital from Northerners built railroads and dozens of new industries.
- Many parts of the South still based their economies on agriculture.
- Most African Americans had little political power and worked under difficult and unfair conditions.
- After Reconstruction ended, African Americans returned to plantations owned by whites, where they worked for wages or became tenant farmers, paying rent for the land they farmed.
- Most tenant farmers ended up becoming sharecroppers.
They paid a share of their crops to cover their rent and farming costs.

Although sharecropping allowed African American farmers to control their own work schedule and working conditions, it also trapped them in poverty because they could not make enough money to pay off their debts and buy their own land.

Why did Southerners want a “New South”?

They realized that the South could never return to the pre-Civil War agricultural economy. Instead they were convinced that the region had to develop a strong industrial economy.