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TRANSLATION THEORY AND PRACTICE FACULTY

# *Self-work*

“The USA”

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## **A NEW NATION**

The first federal constitution of the new American republic was the ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION. With ratification of that document in 1781, the nation had adopted its formal name, the United States of America.

### **Government under the Articles of Confederation**

Under the Articles the only national institution was the Confederation Congress, with limited powers not unlike those of the United Nations. The states retained their sovereignty, with each state government selecting representatives to sit in the Congress. No national executive or judiciary had been established. Each state delegation received an equal vote on all issues. Congress was charged with carrying on the foreign relations of the United States, but because it had no taxing powers (it could only request funds from the states), it had no strength to back up its diplomacy. In addition, it had no jurisdiction over interstate commerce; each state could erect tariffs against its neighbors.

The Confederation Congress, however, achieved one great victory: it succeeded in bringing all 13 of the states to agree on a plan for organizing and governing the western territories (the "public lands") beyond the Appalachians. Each state ceded its western claims to the Congress, which in three ordinances dealing with the Northwest (1784, 1785, and 1787) provided that new states established in the western regions would be equal in status to the older ones. After a territorial stage of quasi self-government, they would pass to full statehood. The land in the NORTHWEST TERRITORY (the Old Northwest, that is, the area north of the Ohio River) would be surveyed in square parcels, 6 mi (9.7 km) on a side, divided into 36 sections, and sold to settlers at low cost; one plot would be reserved for the support of public schools. Furthermore, slavery was declared illegal in the Northwest Territory. (The Southwest Territory, below the Ohio, was organized by the later federal Congress in 1790 as slave country.)

The Confederation Congress, however, did not survive. Because of its lack of taxing power, its currency was of little value; widespread social turbulence in the separate states led many Americans to despair of the new nation. The republic--regarded as a highly precarious form of government in a world of monarchies--was founded with the conviction that the people would exercise the virtue and self-denial required under self-government. Soon, however, that assumption seemed widely discredited. SHAYS'S REBELLION in Massachusetts (1786-87) was an attempt to aid debtors by forcibly closing the court system; mobs terrorized legislators and judges to achieve this end. The new state legislatures, which had assumed all powers when royal governors were expelled, confiscated property,

overturned judicial decisions, issued floods of unsecured paper money, and enacted torrents of legislation, some of it ex post facto (effective retroactively).

The established social and political elite (as distinct from the rough new antiauthoritarian politicians who had begun to invade the state legislatures, talking aggressively of "democracy" and "liberty") urgently asserted the need for a strong national government. The influence that the London authorities had formerly provided as a balance to local government was absent. Minorities that had been protected by the crown, such as the Baptists in Massachusetts and the Quakers in Pennsylvania, were now defenseless. The wealthy classes maintained that they were at the mercy of the masses. The new United States was so weak that it was regarded contemptuously all over the world and its diplomats ignored.

### **The Constitutional Convention of 1787**

A chain of meetings, beginning with one between Virginia and Maryland in 1786 to solve mutual commercial problems and including the larger ANNAPOLIS CONVENTION later that year, led to the CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION in Philadelphia in 1787. Deciding to start afresh and fashion a new national government independent of, and superior to, the states, the delegates made a crucial decision: the nation's source of sovereignty was to lie in the people directly, not in the existing states. Using the British Parliament as a model, they provided for a CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES that would have two houses to check and balance one another. One house would be elected directly by the people of each state, with representation proportionate to population; the other would provide equal representation for each state (two senators each), to be chosen by the state legislatures.

The powers of the national government were to be those previously exercised by London: regulation of interstate and foreign commerce, foreign affairs and defense, and Indian affairs; control of the national domain; and promotion of "the general welfare." Most important, the Congress was empowered to levy "taxes, duties, imposts, and excises." The states were prohibited from carrying on foreign relations, coining money, passing ex post facto laws, impairing the obligations of contracts, and establishing tariffs. Furthermore, if social turbulence within a state became serious, the federal government, following invitation by the legislature or the executive of that state, could bring in troops to insure "a republican form of government."

A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES with powers much like those of the British king, except that the office would be elective, was created. Chosen by a special body (an ELECTORAL COLLEGE), the president would be an independent and powerful national leader, effectively in command of the government. Recalling the assaults on judicial power that had been rampant in the states, the Constitutional Convention also created a fully independent SUPREME

COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, members of which could be removed only if they committed a crime. Then, most important, the document that was drawn up at Philadelphia stated that the Constitution, as well as laws and treaties made under the authority of the U.S. government, "shall be the supreme Law of the Land."

The proposed constitution was to be ratified by specially elected ratifying conventions in each state and to become operative after nine states had ratified it. In the national debate that arose over ratification, ANTI-FEDERALISTS opposed the concentration of power in the national government under the document; a key question was the absence of a BILL OF RIGHTS. Many Americans thought that a bill of rights was necessary to preserve individual liberties, and to accommodate this view proponents of the Constitution promised to add such a bill to the document after ratification. With the clear understanding that amendments would be added, ratification by nine states was completed (1788) and the CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES became operative. The Bill of Rights was then drafted by the first Congress and became the first ten amendments to the Constitution.

### **Diverging Visions of the American Republic**

In the first elections for the new federal Congress (1789), those favoring the new system won a huge majority. George Washington was unanimously elected to be chief executive, the only president so honored. He was inaugurated in the temporary capital, New York City, on Apr. 30, 1789. The American experiment in republican self-government now began again. The unanimity expressed in Washington's election would prove short-lived.

Under the leadership of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander HAMILTON, Congress pledged (1790) the revenues of the federal government to pay off all the outstanding debt of the old Articles of Confederation government as well as the state debts. Much of the domestic debt was in currency that had badly depreciated in value, but Congress agreed to fund it at its higher face value; at one stroke, the financial credit of the new government was assured. Southerners, however, mistrusted the plan, claiming that it served only to enrich northern speculators because the southern states had largely paid off their debts. Many southerners feared, too, that the new nation would be dominated by New Englanders, whose criticism of southern slavery and living styles offended them. Before assenting to the funding proposal, the southerners had obtained agreement that the national capital (after 10 years in Philadelphia) would be placed in the South, on the Potomac River.

In 1791, Hamilton persuaded Congress to charter the BANK OF THE UNITED STATES, modeled after the Bank of England. Primarily private (some of its trustees would be federally appointed), it would receive and hold the government's revenues, issue currency and regulate that of state-chartered banks, and be free to invest as it saw fit the federal tax moneys in its vaults. Because it would control the largest pool of capital in the country, it could shape the growth of the national economy. Hamilton also proposed (with limited success) that protective tariffs be established to exclude foreign goods and thus stimulate the development of U.S. factories. In short, he laid out the economic philosophy of what became the FEDERALIST PARTY: that the government should actively encourage economic growth by providing aid to capitalists. Flourishing cities and a vigorous industrial order: this was the American future he envisioned. His strongly nationalist position gained the support of the elites in New York City and Philadelphia as well as broad-based support among the Yankees of New England.

On the other hand, southerners, a rural and widely dispersed people, feared the cities and the power of remote bankers. With Thomas JEFFERSON they worked to counteract the Federalists' anglicized vision of the United States. Southerners rejected the concept of an active government, preferring one committed to laissez-faire (that is, allowing people to act without government interference) in all areas--economic and cultural. Jefferson declared that close ties between government and capitalists would inevitably lead to corruption and exploitation. In his view, behind-the-scene schemers would use graft to secure special advantages (tariffs, bounties, and the like) that would allow them to profiteer at the community's expense.

The Middle Atlantic states at first supported the nationalistic Federalists, who won a second term for Washington in 1792 and elected John ADAMS to the presidency in 1796. However, many of the Scots-Irish, Germans, and Dutch in these states disliked Yankees and distrusted financiers and business proprietors. The growing working class in Philadelphia and New York City turned against the Federalists' elitism. By 1800 the ethnic minorities of the Middle Atlantic states helped swing that region behind Jefferson, a Virginian, and his Democratic-Republican party, giving the presidency to Jefferson. Thereafter, until 1860, with few intermissions, the South and the Middle Atlantic states together dominated the federal government. Although the U.S. Constitution had made no mention of POLITICAL PARTIES, it had taken only a decade for the development of a party system that roughly reflected two diverging visions for the new republic. Political parties would remain an integral part of the American system of government.

During the 1790s, however, foreign affairs became dominant, and dreams of republican simplicity and quietude were dashed. A long series of wars between Britain and Revolutionary France began in that decade, and the Americans were inevitably pulled into the fray. By JAY'S TREATY (1794) the United States

reluctantly agreed to British wartime confiscation of U.S. ship cargoes, alleged to be contraband, in return for British evacuation of western forts on American soil and the opening of the British West Indies to U.S. vessels. Under John Adams, similar depredations by the French navy against American trading ships led to the Quasi-War (1798-1801) on the high seas. Federalist hysteria over alleged French-inspired subversion produced the ALIEN AND SEDITION ACTS (1798), which sought to crush all criticism of the government.

## **The Democratic Republic**

As president, Jefferson attempted to implement the Democratic- Republican vision of America; he cut back the central government's activities, reducing the size of the court system, letting excise taxes lapse, and contracting the military forces. Paradoxically, in what was perhaps Jefferson's greatest achievement as president, he vastly increased the scope of U.S. power: the securing of the LOUISIANA PURCHASE (1803) from France practically doubled American territory, placing the western boundary of the United States along the base of the Rocky Mountains.

In 1811, under Jefferson's successor, James MADISON, the 20- year charter of the Bank of the United States was allowed to lapse, further eroding the Federalists' nationalist program. Renewed warfare between Britain and France, during which American foreign trade was progressively throttled down almost to nothing, led eventually to the WAR OF 1812. The British insisted on the right freely to commandeer U.S. cargoes as contraband and to impress American sailors into their navy. To many Americans the republic seemed in grave peril.

With reluctance and against unanimous Federalist opposition, Congress made the decision to go to war against Britain. Except for some initial naval victories, the war went badly for the Americans. Western Indians, under the gifted TECUMSEH, fought on the British side. In 1814, however, an invading army from Canada was repelled. Then, just as a peace treaty was being concluded in Ghent (Belgium), Andrew JACKSON crushed another invading British army as it sought to take New Orleans. The war thus ended on a triumphant note, and the republic was confirmed. The Federalists, who in the HARTFORD CONVENTION (in Connecticut, 1814) had capped their opposition to the war with demands for major changes in the Constitution, now were regarded as disloyal, and their party dwindled down to a base in New England and in the 1820s dissolved. Robbed of their enemy, Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans broke into factions, effectively disappearing as a national party.

## **AN AGE OF BOUNDLESSNESS: 1815-50**

The volatile and expansive years from 1815 to 1850 were, in many ways, an age of boundlessness when limits that had previously curbed human aspirations seemed to disappear.

## **Economic and Cultural Ferment**

After 1815 the American economy began to expand rapidly. The cotton boom in the South spread settlement swiftly across the Gulf Plains: the Deep South was born. Farmers also moved into the Lake Plains north of the Ohio River, their migration greatly accelerating after the completion of the ERIE CANAL in 1825. Practically all Indians east of the Mississippi were placed on small reservations or forced to move to the Great Plains beyond the Missouri River. Canals and railroads opened the interior to swift expansion, of both settlement and trade. In the Midwest many new cities, such as Chicago, appeared, as enormous empires of wheat and livestock farms came into being. From 1815 to 1850 a new western state entered the Union, on the average, every two and one-half years.

The westward movement of the FRONTIER was matched in the Northeast by rapid economic development. National productivity surged during the 1820s; prices spurted to a peak during the 1830s and dropped for a time during the 1840s; both prices and productivity soared upward again during the 1850s, reaching new heights. A business cycle had appeared, producing periods of boom and bust, and the factory system became well developed. After the GOLD RUSH that began in California in 1848-49, industrial development was further stimulated during the 1850s by the arrival of \$500 million in gold and silver from the Sierra Nevada and other western regions. A willingness to take risks formerly thought wildly imprudent became a national virtue. Land values rose, and hundreds of new communities appeared in the western states.

Meanwhile, property tests for voting were disappearing, white manhood suffrage became the rule, and most offices were made elective. A communications revolution centering in the inexpensive newspaper and in a national fascination with mass education (except in the South) sent literacy rates soaring. The Second Great Awakening (1787-1825), a new religious revival that originated in New England, spread an evangelical excitement across the country. In its wake a ferment of social reform swept the northern states. The slave system of the South spread westward as rapidly as the free labor system of the North, and during the 1830s ABOLITIONISTS mounted a crusade to hammer at the evils of slavery.

## **Expansion of the American Domain**

The years 1815-50 brought further expansion of the national domain. In the Anglo-American Convention of 1818, the 49th parallel was established as the border between Canada and the United States from the Lake of the Woods to the Rockies, and in the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819, Spain ceded Florida and its claims in the Oregon Country to the United States. During the 1840s a sense of MANIFEST DESTINY seized the American mind (although many individuals, especially in New England, were more restrained in their thinking). Continent-wide expansion

seemed inevitable. Texas, which had declared its independence from Mexico in 1835-36 (see TEXAS REVOLUTION), was annexed in 1845. Then a dispute with Mexico concerning the Rio Grande as the border of Texas led to the MEXICAN WAR (1846-48). While U.S. armies invaded the heartland of Mexico to gain victory, other forces sliced off the northern half of that country--the provinces of New Mexico and Alta California. In the Treaty of GUADALUPE HIDALGO (1848), \$15 million was paid for the Mexican cession of those provinces, more than 3 million sq km (roughly 1 million sq m).

In 1846, Britain and the United States settled the OREGON QUESTION, concluding a treaty that divided the Oregon Country at the 49th parallel and bringing the Pacific Northwest into the American nation. In addition, by the GADSDEN PURCHASE of 1853 the United States acquired (for \$10 million) the southern portions of the present states of New Mexico and Arizona. By 1860 the Union comprised 33 states, packed solid through the first rank beyond the Mississippi and reaching westward to include Texas, as well as California and Oregon on the Pacific Coast. Fed by a high birthrate and by the heavy immigration from Ireland and Germany that surged dramatically during the 1840s, the nation's population was leaping upward: from 9.6 million in 1820 to 23 million in 1850 and 31.5 million in 1860.

### **Domestic Politics: 1815-46**

In a nationalist frame of mind at the end of the War of 1812, Congress chartered the Second Bank of the United States in 1816, erected the first protective tariff (see TARIFF ACTS), and supported internal improvements (roads and bridges) to open the interior. President James MONROE presided (1817-25) over the so-called Era of Good Feelings, followed by John Quincy ADAMS (1825-29).

Chief Justice John MARSHALL led the Supreme Court in a crucial series of decisions, beginning in 1819. He declared that within its powers the federal government could not be interfered with by the states (MCCULLOCH V. MARYLAND) and that regulation of interstate and international commerce was solely a federal preserve (GIBBONS V. OGDEN and BROWN V. MARYLAND). In 1820, in the MISSOURI COMPROMISE, Congress took charge of the question of slavery in the territories by declaring it illegal above 36 deg 30 min in the huge region acquired by the Louisiana Purchase. Witnessing the Latin American revolutions against Spanish rule, the American government in 1823 asserted its paramountcy in the Western Hemisphere by issuing the MONROE DOCTRINE. In diplomatic but clear language it stated that the United States would fight to exclude further European extensions of sovereignty into its hemisphere.

During the presidency of Andrew JACKSON (1829-37), a sharp bipolarization occurred again in the nation's politics. Of Scots-Irish descent, Jackson hated the English, and he was, in turn, as thoroughly disliked by New Englanders, who



thought him violent and barbaric. He made enemies in the South, as well, when in 1832 South Carolina, asserting superior STATE RIGHTS, attempted to declare null and void within its borders the tariff of 1828 (see NULLIFICATION). In his Nullification Proclamation (1832), Jackson declared that the federal government was supreme according to the Constitution. He skillfully outmaneuvered the South Carolinians, forcing them to relent. In 1832 he vetoed the rechartering of the Second Bank of the United States on the grounds that it caused the booms and busts that so alarmed the country and that it served the wealthy while exploiting the farmers and working people. To oppose him, the old Federalist coalition was reborn in the form of the American WHIG PARTY. With a DEMOCRATIC PARTY emerging behind Jackson and embodying the old Jeffersonian Democratic- Republican coalition, two-party rivalries appeared in every state. By the 1840s modern mass political parties, organized down into every ward and precinct, had appeared.

Led by Henry CLAY and Daniel WEBSTER, the Whigs called for protective tariffs, a national bank, and internal improvements to stimulate the economy. Moralists in politics, they also demanded active intervention by state governments to maintain the sanctity of the Sabbath, put down alcoholic beverages, and "Americanize" the immigrants in the public schools. Yankees, who by now had migrated in great numbers into the Midwest, leaned strongly toward the Whigs. Many southerners admired Yankee ways and tended to vote for Whig candidates, too.

Democrats continued to condemn banks and tariffs as sources of corruption and exploitation, and in Jefferson's tradition insisted on cultural laissez-faire, the freedom of people to live as they desired. The minority out-groups--Irish Catholics and Germans--concurred, voting strongly Democratic in order to ward off the imposition of Yankee morals. During the presidency of Martin VAN BUREN (1837-41), Democrats succeeded in entirely separating banking and government in the INDEPENDENT TREASURY SYSTEM, by which the government stored and controlled its own funds. A brief Whig interlude under William Henry HARRISON (1841) and John TYLER (1841-45) was followed by the presidency of the Democrat James K. POLK (1845-49), who in the Walker Tariff (1846) brought the United States closer to a free-trade basis.

### **Growing Sectional Conflicts**

President Polk's war with Mexico ripped open the slavery question again. Was it to be allowed in the new territories? The WILMOT PROVISION (1846), which would have excluded slavery, became a rallying point for both sides, being voted on again and again in Congress and successfully held off by southerners. Abolitionism, led by William Lloyd GARRISON and others and now strong in many northern circles, called for the immediate emancipation of slaves with no compensation to slaveowners. Most northern whites disliked blacks and did not support abolition;

they did want to disallow slavery in the territories so they could be preserved for white settlement based on northern ideals: free labor, dignity of work, and economic progress.

In 1848 northerners impatient with both of the existing parties formed the FREE-SOIL PARTY. By polling 300,000 votes for their candidate, Martin Van Buren, they denied victory to the Democrats and put the Whig Zachary TAYLOR in the White House (1849-50; on his death Millard FILLMORE became president, 1850-53). The COMPROMISE OF 1850 seemed to settle the slavery expansion issue by the principle of POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY, allowing the people who lived in the Mexican cession to decide for themselves. A strong FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW was also passed in 1850, giving new powers to slaveowners to reach into northern states to recapture escaped slaves.

## **THE CIVIL WAR ERA**

As the 1850s began, it seemed for a time that the issue of slavery and other sectional differences between North and South might eventually be reconciled. But with the westward thrust of the American nation, all attempts at compromise were thwarted, and diverging economic, political, and philosophical interests became more apparent. The resulting civil war transformed the American nation.

### **Political Fragmentation**

In 1854 the KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT threw open the huge unorganized lands of the Louisiana Purchase to popular sovereignty, repealing the Missouri Compromise line of 1820. The North exploded in rage. Thousands defected from the Whig party to establish a new and much more antisouthern body (and one wholly limited to the northern states), the REPUBLICAN PARTY. The Republicans were aided by an enormous anti-Catholic outburst under way at the same time, aimed at the large wave of Irish Catholic immigration. Anti-Catholicism was already draining away Whigs to a new organization, the American party, soon known as the KNOW-NOTHING PARTY. When in 1856 it proved unable to hold together its members, north and south, because of disagreements over slavery, the anti-Catholics joined the Republicans.

In Kansas civil war broke out between pro-slavery and anti-slavery advocates, as settlers attempted to formalize their position on the institution prior to the territory's admission as a state. The Democratic presidents Franklin PIERCE (1853-57) and James BUCHANAN (1857-61) appeared to favor the pro-slavery group in Kansas despite its use of fraud and violence. In 1857 the Supreme Court, southern dominated, intensified northern alarm in its decision in the case of DRED SCOTT V. SANDFORD. The Court ruled that Congress had no authority to exclude slavery from the territories and thus, that the Missouri Compromise line had been unconstitutional all along. Thousands of northerners now became

convinced that a "slave conspiracy" had infiltrated the national government and that it intended to make slavery a nationwide institution.

In 1860 the political system became completely fragmented. The Democrats split into northern and southern wings, presenting two different candidates for the presidency; the small CONSTITUTIONAL UNION PARTY attempted to rally the former Whigs behind a third. The Republicans, however, were able to secure the election of Abraham LINCOLN to the White House.

Southerners had viewed the rise of the Yankee-dominated Republican party with great alarm. They were convinced that the party was secretly controlled by abolitionists (although most northerners detested the abolitionists) and that Yankees believed in using government to enforce their moralistic crusades. In 1859, John BROWN led a raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Va., hoping to incite a slave insurrection. His action--and his subsequent deification by some northerners--helped persuade southerners that emancipation of the slaves, if northerners obtained control of the country, was sooner or later inevitable.

## **Secession**

Southern leaders had threatened to leave the Union if Lincoln won the election of 1860. Many South Carolinians, in particular, were convinced that Republican-sponsored emancipation would lead to bloody massacres as blacks sought vengeance against whites. In order to prevent this horror South Carolina seceded in December 1860, soon after the victory of Lincoln, an undeniably sectional candidate; it was optimistic about the eventual outcome of its action. Before Lincoln's inauguration (March 1861) six more states followed (Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas). In February their representatives gathered in Montgomery, Ala., to form the CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA. On Apr. 12, 1861, when President Lincoln moved to reposition the federal troops at FORT SUMTER, in Charleston Harbor, Confederate shore batteries launched a 34-hour battering of the installation, forcing its surrender. The U.S. CIVIL WAR had begun.

## **The War between the States**

Lincoln moved swiftly. On April 15 he called the remaining states to provide 75,000 troops to put down the Confederacy; Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee reluctantly seceded. The capital of the Confederacy moved to Richmond. On July 21, 1861, the first major battle between Union and Confederate forces occurred--at Bull Run (see BULL RUN, BATTLES OF), south of Washington, D.C.--resulting in a dramatic southern victory. Thereafter, both sides settled down to a long conflict.

It became an immense struggle. With a total U.S. population of fewer than 32 million, the number of dead reached 620,000 (360,000 northerners out of an army of about 1.5 million and 260,000 southerners in an army of about 1 million). In contrast, during World War II, when the American population was 135 million and its military forces fought for 4 years throughout the world, the total dead reached 400,000. In 1861 about 22 million people lived in the North, as against some 9 million people in the South, of whom 3.5 million were black. Although the North possessed a vigorous system of industry and a well-developed railroad network, Europeans were highly skeptical of a northern victory because the Confederacy was practically as large as Western Europe and fought with a determined passion for its independence. The North had to invade and defeat the opposition in order to win; the South had only to defend its borders. The conflict was not so uneven as it seemed.

Lincoln launched an all-out effort: he declared a naval blockade of the Confederacy; worked hard to maintain the loyalty of the slaveholding border states (Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri); invaded Tennessee to gain a base of power in the heart of the Confederacy; cut the South in two by taking the Mississippi River; and looked for a general who could win. This last task took him 2 years. Gen. George B. MCCLELLAN proved disappointingly conservative, and his successors were bumbler. After Gen. Ulysses S. GRANT won major victories in the western theater, Lincoln brought him to Washington in 1864 to face the brilliant Confederate commander, Robert E. LEE.

By mid-1863 the South was in desperate straits, lacking both food and supplies. A great northward thrust was turned back at Gettysburg, Pa., in July of that year (see GETTYSBURG, BATTLE OF). Thereafter, Grant mounted a relentless campaign that hammered down toward Richmond, at hideous cost in casualties. Union Gen. William T. SHERMAN, meanwhile, was slashing through Georgia to the sea, leaving a wide swath of total destruction, and then turning northward through the Carolinas. By April 1865, Grant had finally rounded Lee's flank, and on the 9th of that month, Lee surrendered at APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE. Confederate president Jefferson DAVIS intended to fight on, but it was hopeless. The Civil War was over.

### **A Nation Transformed: The North**

The war had transformed both North and South. On Jan. 1, 1863, Lincoln had issued his EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, declaring slavery dead wherever rebellion existed (in the border states, it was terminated by later local action). In addition, the enormous war effort taught the North lessons in modern organization and the use of large corporations. In Washington the Republican majority enacted a classically Hamiltonian program: high protective tariffs, lavish aid to capitalists to build railroads and exploit natural resources, free homestead

grants for settlers, and banking and currency legislation that created one national system of paper money. The MORRILL ACT of 1862 provided grants of land for the establishment of land-grant universities in each state to train the agriculturalists, engineers, and other professionals needed to run an industrialized economy.

The two-party system survived in the North despite the war. Democrats never sank below 40 percent of the vote because many northerners opposed the conflict, or at least Republican policies. In the DRAFT RIOTS of 1863, Irish Catholics and other New Yorkers fiercely protested the new conscription law, which seemed a special hardship to poor people. The rioters, as well as many other northerners, were hostile toward abolition; they feared that Republican policies would send hordes of freed slaves northward to compete for jobs. Democrats also opposed the powerful centralizing tendencies of the programs pushed by the Republicans, as well as their aid to capitalists.

## **Reconstruction**

A week after Appomattox, Lincoln was assassinated. Now Andrew JOHNSON assumed office and moved quickly to establish a plan for RECONSTRUCTION. He asked southern whites only to repudiate debts owed by the Confederacy, declare secession null and void, and ratify the 13TH AMENDMENT (which declared slavery illegal). When Congress convened in December 1865, newly elected southerners were already on the scene waiting to be admitted to their seats. Many of them had been elected on the basis of BLACK CODES, established in the southern states in 1865-66 to restore a form of quasi-slavery. To the shocked and angered North, it seemed that the sufferings endured in the war had been in vain: politics as before the war--only now with a powerful southern Democratic bloc in Congress--would resume.

The Republican majority in Congress refused to admit southern legislators to their seats until a congressional committee reexamined the entire question of Reconstruction. Soon, Radical Republicans (those who wished to use the victory as an opportunity to remake the South in the Yankee image) were in open conflict with Johnson. He attempted to terminate the FREEDMEN'S BUREAU (an agency established in 1865 to aid refugees) and to veto legislation aimed at protecting the civil rights of former slaves (see CIVIL RIGHTS ACTS). In the congressional election of 1866 a huge majority of Republicans was elected, and the Radicals gained a precarious ascendancy. Senator Charles SUMNER of Massachusetts and Representative Thaddeus STEVENS (New England-born) of Pennsylvania were among the leaders of the Radical cause.

The 14TH AMENDMENT (enacted in 1866; ratified in 1868) made all persons born or naturalized in the country U.S. citizens and forbade any state to interfere with their fundamental civil rights. In March 1867 all state governments in the

South were terminated and military occupation established. Federal commanders were charged with reconstructing southern governments through constitutional conventions, to which delegates were to be elected by universal male suffrage. After a new state government was in operation and had ratified the 14th Amendment, its representatives would be admitted to Congress. In February 1868 an impeachment effort sought unsuccessfully to remove President Johnson from office.

The Republican majority in Congress made no significant effort to create social equality for blacks, but only to give them the vote and to ensure them equal protection under the law (trial by jury, freedom of movement, the right to hold office and any employment, and the like). This political equality would give blacks an equal start, Republicans insisted, and they would then carry the burden of proving themselves equal in other ways. Yet Republicans well knew that antiblack attitudes persisted in the North as well as in the South. Until ratification (1870) of the 15TH AMENDMENT, which made it illegal to deny the vote on the grounds of race, most northern states refused blacks the vote.

### **A Nation Transformed: The South**

Like the North, the South was transformed by the Civil War and its aftermath. Southerners had learned lessons in the effectiveness of a strong central government and realized the impossibility of continuing the old ways of the antebellum period. Former Whigs in the South, often called Conservatives, pushed eagerly to build industry and commerce in the Yankee style. Meanwhile, reconstructed southern state governments enacted many reforms, establishing free public schools for all, popular election of all officials, more equitable taxes, and more humane penal laws.

Republican Ulysses S. Grant was elected president in 1868 with electoral votes gained in occupied southern states. Democrats alleged that Radical Reconstruction was not genuinely concerned with aiding black people, but with using southern black votes to keep the Republicans in power in Congress and to retain their protective tariffs and other aids to industrialists. When evidence of corruption surfaced during the Grant administration, Democrats declared that it proved that the outcome of Republican friendliness to capitalists was graft and plunder.

By 1870 the antisouthern mood that had supported Radical Reconstruction had faded, as had the surge of concern for southern blacks. New domestic problems were pushing to the fore. A resurgence of white voting in the South, together with the use of violence to intimidate blacks and their white sympathizers, brought southern states back into Democratic hands. Northerners, awakened to economic questions by the great depression that began in 1873 and lasted for 5 years, tacitly agreed to return the race issue to the control of southern whites.

After the disputed election of 1876, amid evidence of electoral corruption, the Republican presidential candidate promised to withdraw the last federal occupation troops from the South. The election was decided by a congressional electoral commission, and Rutherford B. HAYES became president. As promised, he withdrew (1877) the troops; Reconstruction was over.

## **THE GILDED AGE**

The era known as the GILDED AGE (1870s to 1890s) was a time of vigorous, exploitative individualism. Despite widespread suffering by industrial workers, southern sharecroppers, displaced American Indians, and other groups, a mood of optimism possessed the United States. The theories of the English biologist Charles Darwin--expounded in *The Origin of Species* (1859)--concerning the natural selection of organisms best suited to survive in their environment began to influence American opinion. Some intellectuals in the United States applied the idea of the survival of the fittest to human societies (SOCIAL DARWINISM) and arrived at the belief that government aid to the unfortunate was wrong.

### **Industrialization and Large-Scale Exploitation of Natural Resources**

During the Gilded Age ambitious and imaginative capitalists ranged the continent looking for new opportunities. Business lurched erratically from upswings to slumps, while the country's industrial base grew rapidly. Factories and mines labored heavily through these years to provide the raw materials and finished products needed for expansion of the railroad system. In 1865 (as construction of the first TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD was underway; completed 1869) approximately 56,000 km (35,000 mi) of track stretched across the United States; by 1910 the total reached about 386,000 km (240,000 mi) of interconnected uniform-gauge track. By 1890 the United States contained one-third of the world's railroad trackage.

After new gold and silver discoveries in the late 1850s, until about 1875, individual prospectors explored the western country and desert basins in search of mineral riches. Then mining corporations took over, using hired laborers and eastern-trained engineers. Indians were either brutally exterminated or placed on small reservations. Warfare with the Great Plains Indians broke out in 1864; these INDIAN WARS did not entirely subside until after the slaughtering of the buffalo herds, the basis of Indian life, which had occurred by the mid-1880s. Through the DAWES ACT of 1887, which forced most Indians to choose 160-acre (65-ha) allotments within their reservations, reformers hoped to break down tribal bonds and induce Indians to take up sedentary agriculture. Unallocated reservation lands were declared surplus and sold to whites.

Cattle ranching was the first large-scale enterprise to invade the Great Plains beginning in the late 1860s. By the 1880s, however, the open range began to give

way to fenced pastureland and to agriculture, made possible by the newly invented barbed-wire fence and by "dry farming," a technique of preserving soil moisture by frequent plowing. Millions of farmers moved into the high plains west of the 100th meridian. So huge was their grain output that slumping world prices beginning in the mid-1880s put them into severe financial straits. Meanwhile, the vast continental sweep between Kansas and California became filled with new states.

By the early 1900s the nation's economy, tied together by the railroads into a single market, was no longer composed primarily of thousands of small producers who sold to local markets. Rather, it was dominated by a small number of large firms that sold nationwide and to the world at large. With great size, however, came large and complex problems. In 1887, Congress created the INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION to curb cutthroat competition among the railroads and to ensure that railroad rates were "reasonable and just." In 1890, on the other hand, Congress attempted to restore competition through passage of the SHERMAN ANTI-TRUST ACT, which declared illegal trusts and other combinations that restrained trade. The U.S. Supreme Court favored laissez-faire and consistently blocked both federal and state efforts to regulate private business. The so-called robber barons and their immense fortunes were practically unscathed as they exploited the nation's natural resources and dominated its economic life.

### New Social Groupings: Immigrants, Urbanites, and Union Members

In 1890 the American people numbered 63 million, double the 1860 population. During these years the nation's cities underwent tremendous growth. Many new urbanites came from the American countryside, but many others came from abroad. From 1860 to 1890 more than 10 million immigrants arrived in the United States; from 1890 to 1920, 15 million more arrived (see IMMIGRATION). Most were concentrated in northern cities: by 1910, 75 percent of immigrants lived in urban areas, while less than 50 percent of native-born Americans did so. In the 1880s the so-called new immigration began: in addition to the Germans, Scandinavians, Irish, and others of the older immigrant groups, there came such peoples as Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Bohemians, Greeks, and Jews (from central and eastern Europe, especially Russia). Roman Catholics grew in number from 1.6 million in 1850 to 12 million in 1900, producing a renewed outburst of bitter anti-Catholic nativism in the 1880s. The large cities, with their saloons, theaters, dance halls, and immigrant slums, were feared by many native American Protestants, who lived primarily in small cities and the rural countryside.

The outbreak of labor protests from the 1870s on, often characterized by immigrant workers opposing native-born employers, intensified the hostility. In 1878 the KNIGHTS OF LABOR formed, opening its ranks to all working people, skilled or unskilled. The Knights called for sweeping social and economic reforms, and their



numbers rose to 700,000 in 1886. Then, as the organization broke apart because of internal stresses, the American Federation of Labor, under Samuel GOMPERS, formed to take its place. Concentrating on skilled craftworkers and tight organization, it endured.

## **Domestic Politics**

Gilded Age politics became a contest between evenly balanced Republicans and Democrats. Winning elections by small margins, they alternated in their control of Congress and the White House. Five men served as Republican presidents: Hayes; James A. GARFIELD (1881); Chester A. ARTHUR (1881-85), who succeeded Garfield on his assassination; Benjamin HARRISON (1889-93); and William MCKINLEY (1897-1901). Their party regarded industrial growth and capitalist leadership with approval, believing that they led to an ever-widening opening of opportunity for all.

Grover CLEVELAND rose from obscurity to become Democratic governor of New York in the early 1880s and then U.S. president (1885-89; 1893-97; although he won a popular-vote plurality in the election of 1888, he lost to Harrison in the electoral college). Reared a Jacksonian Democrat, he believed that society is always in danger of exploitation by the wealthy and powerful. A vigorous president, he labored to clean up government by making civil service effective; took back huge land grants given out fraudulently in the West; and battled to lower the protective tariff.

In the Great Plains and the South, grain and cotton farmers, suffering from falling crop prices, demanded currency inflation to raise prices. By 1892 a POPULIST PARTY had appeared, to call for free coinage of silver to achieve this goal. Cleveland resisted, stating that such a monetary policy would destroy confidence, prolong the great depression that began in 1893, and injure city consumers. In 1896 the Democrats, taken over by southern and western inflationists, ran William Jennings BRYAN on a FREE SILVER platform. Ethnic voters surged into the Republican ranks--for the depression was a disastrous one and the Republican party had always urged active government intervention to stimulate the economy. In addition, as city dwellers they feared inflation. William McKinley's election began a long period of one-party (Republican) domination in the northern states and in Washington.