

Reconstruction: 1865-1877



**A Presentation based on the
Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE)
Objectives for High School History
Students**

Objectives (GPS)

- **SSUSH10 Identify legal, political, and social dimensions of Reconstruction.**
 - a. **Compare and contrast Presidential Reconstruction with Congressional Reconstruction, including the significance of Lincoln's assassination and Johnson's impeachment.**
 - b. **Investigate the efforts of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau) to support poor whites, former slaves, and American Indians.**
 - c. **Describe the significance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments.**
 - d. **Explain the Black Codes, the Ku Klux Klan, and other forms of resistance to racial equality during Reconstruction.**
 - e. **Analyze how the Presidential Election of 1876 marked the end of Reconstruction.**

Reconstruction

- After the war, the South needed to be rebuilt physically, economically, and politically.
- **Reconstruction** was the rebuilding of these systems after the war.





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SSUSH10: The student will identify legal, political, and social dimensions of Reconstruction.

- a. Compare and contrast Presidential Reconstruction with Congressional Reconstruction, including the significance of Lincoln's assassination and Johnson's impeachment.

Two Approaches in Reconstruction

1. **Presidential Reconstruction (1865-1867)** was a relatively lenient approach towards for re-admitting the South into the Union.
2. **Radical Reconstruction (1867-1877)** (aka Congressional or Military Reconstruction) was a harsher plan developed by Republican Congressmen who blamed the South for the Civil War and sought revenge.

Lincoln's "Ten Percent" Plan for Reconstruction

Lincoln began planning for Reconstruction during the war. His plan provided:

1. general amnesty (pardons) to Southerners who took an oath of loyalty and accepted the end of slavery (Some political and military leaders were excluded from this offer.)
2. when 10 percent of the state's voters took the oath, the state could organize a new state government

Lincoln's plan was very lenient and was intended to make it easy for the South to rejoin the Union.

The Radical Republicans

- **Republican party members in Congress offered their own plan for Reconstruction.**
- **The Republicans wanted to achieve three goals by using this plan:**
 1. **prevent Confederate leaders from regaining power after the war**
 2. **Make the Republican Party strong in the South**
 3. **use the Federal government to help African Americans by giving them the right to vote**
- **The Radical Republican plan was much harsher on the South than those proposed by Presidents Lincoln and Johnson.**

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- b. Investigate the efforts of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau) to support poor whites, former slaves, and American Indians.

Sherman's Field Order No. 15

- In an effort to help former slaves, or freedmen, after his “March to the Sea,” **General William T. Sherman set aside abandoned land along the coast for use by former slaves by issuing Field Order No. 15 in January 1865.**
- **This confiscated as Union property a strip of coastline stretching from Charleston, South Carolina to the St. John's River in Florida,**
- **The order redistributed the roughly 400,000 acres of land to newly freed black families in forty-acre segments from Charleston to near Jacksonville.**
- **President Johnson revoked the order later that year.**
- **Most, if not all of this land was later returned to its former owners or sold by ex-slaves who received it.**

The Freedmen's Bureau

- Created in 1865, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (aka the Freedmen's Bureau) was a temporary government agency formed to support poor whites, former slaves, and American Indians by providing:
 - Land
 - Food
 - Clothing
 - Jobs
 - Education



Freedmen's Bureau Results

- **Food:** Sept. 1865-1866 issued nearly 30,000 rations per day and prevented mass starvation, but recall that the slave population was ~3M people
- **Work:** labor contracts (pay, work hours), special courts for disputes; criticism re: who got best deal
- **Education:** worked with Northern charities to provide education to former slaves and provided about 3,000 schools and paid teachers. Also helped develop (but not establish) colleges for training African American teachers.
- **Land:** none
- **Clothing and shelter:** some
- **Healthcare:** some, esp. for smallpox & cholera patients

The End of the Bureau

- Underfunded and often embroiled in political battles, the Freedmen's Bureau fell short of achieving all of its goals.
- It did provide some relief in the form of food and clothing for mostly blacks but in some measure also to poor whites and American Indians.
- It also provided segregated schools for black children as well as very limited help in establishing black colleges.
- It also acted as a labor negotiator for landowners and former slaves.
- This agency ceased operations in 1872.

Morehouse College

- Founded in Augusta, GA in 1867 by a pastor and a former slave as a grammar school with the purpose of training freed slaves to read and write
- Later moved to Atlanta, GA and eventually became a college-level institution.

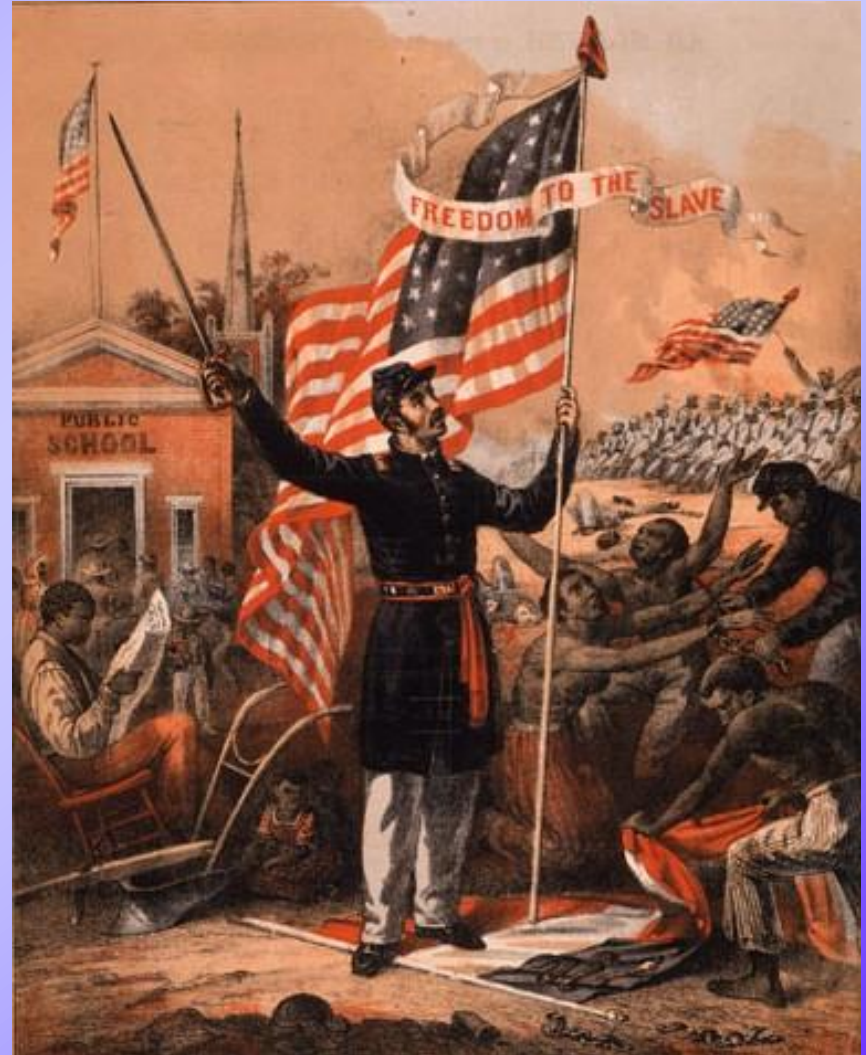


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- c. Describe the significance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments.
- 13th Amendment (1865): banned Slavery in the U.S.
 - 14th Amendment (1866): granted citizenship to all people born in the U.S. or naturalized, including former slaves, and guaranteed due process and equal protection rights
 - 15th Amendment (1870): granted voting rights to all male freedmen

The Civil War Amendments

- **13th Amendment:** Passed by Congress in 1865, it banned slavery in the United States. As part of Reconstruction, Southern states had to ratify the 13th Amendment to rejoin the Union



14th Amendment

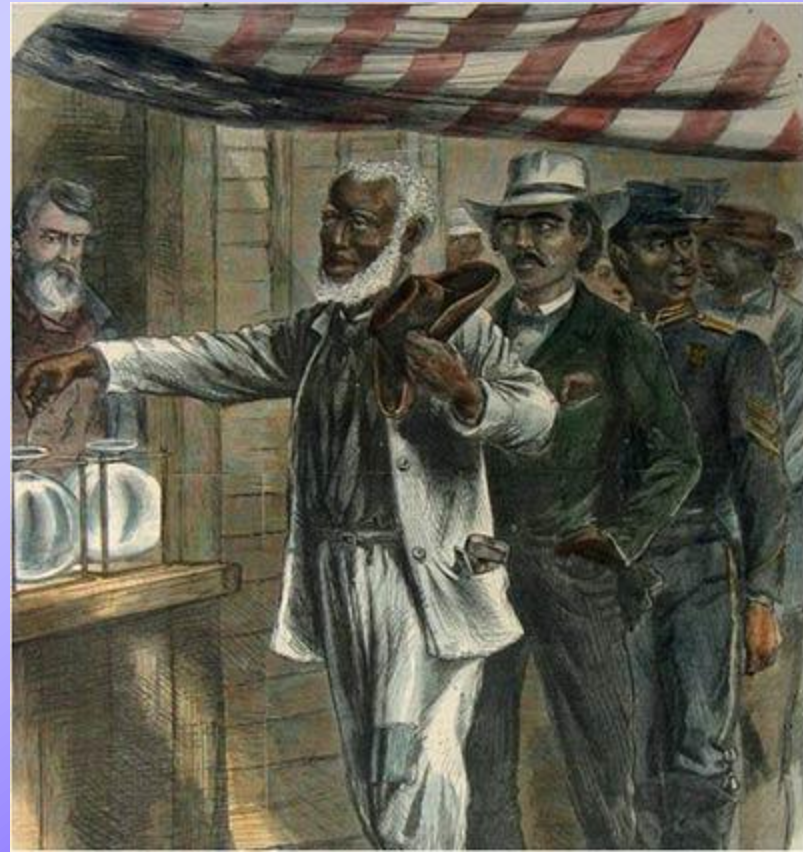
- passed by Congress in 1866
- granted citizenship to all people born or naturalized in the U.S., including former slaves
- gave all people the right to “due process” and equal protection
- Southern states had to ratify the 14th Amendment in order to rejoin the Union



15th Amendment

- ratified in 1870
- stated that the right to vote can not be denied “on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude”
- In essence, the 15th Amendment granted **suffrage** to the former slaves

(This Amendment however did not include women or Native Americans)

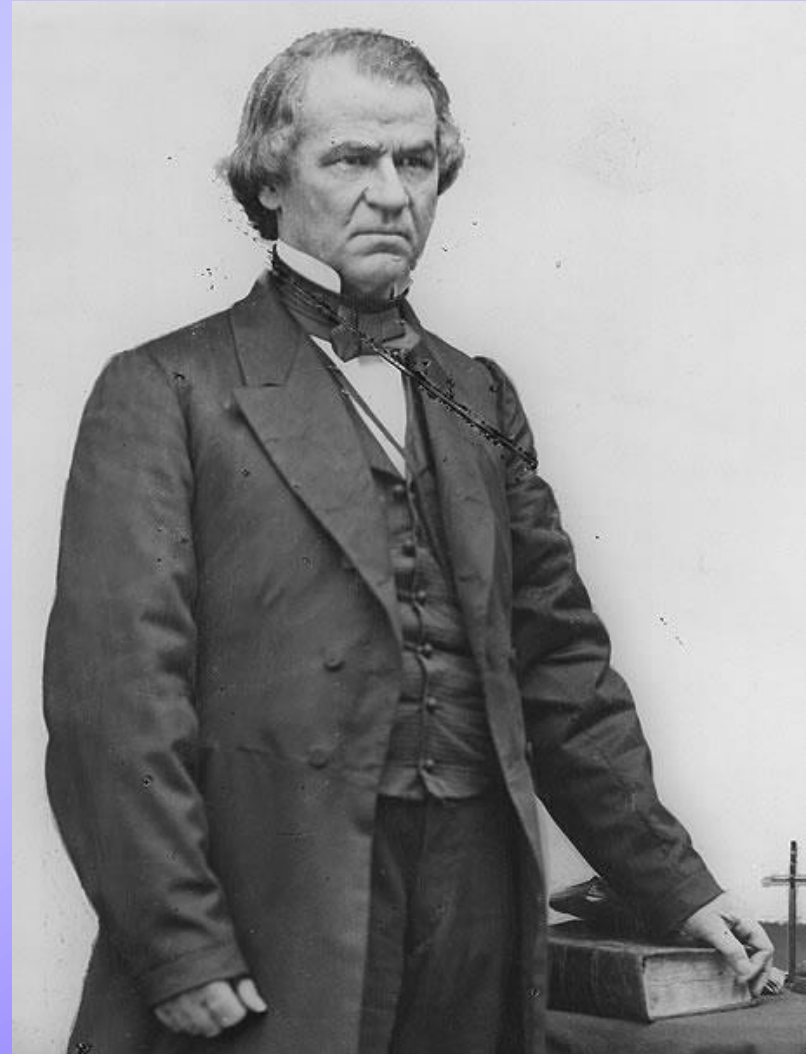


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d. Explain the Black Codes, the Ku Klux Klan, and other forms of resistance to racial equality during Reconstruction.

Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

- Vice President Johnson became President after Lincoln's assassination in 1865
- Johnson, a Southern Democrat from Tennessee, remained loyal to the Union during the war
- Johnson had his own plan for Reconstruction



Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

- While Congress was in recess (vacation), Johnson offered a pardon to all former citizens of the South if they took an oath of loyalty to the Union
- Johnson did not include the former elite planter class in the amnesty because he blamed them for causing the war. This group would have to appeal directly to Johnson for a pardon

Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

- Johnson began to allow Southern states back into the Union after they ratified the 13th Amendment
- Johnson also began to pardon former Southern political and military leaders, many of whom were then elected to the U.S. Congress
- When Congress reconvened six months later, many Radical Republicans were outraged with Johnson's plan

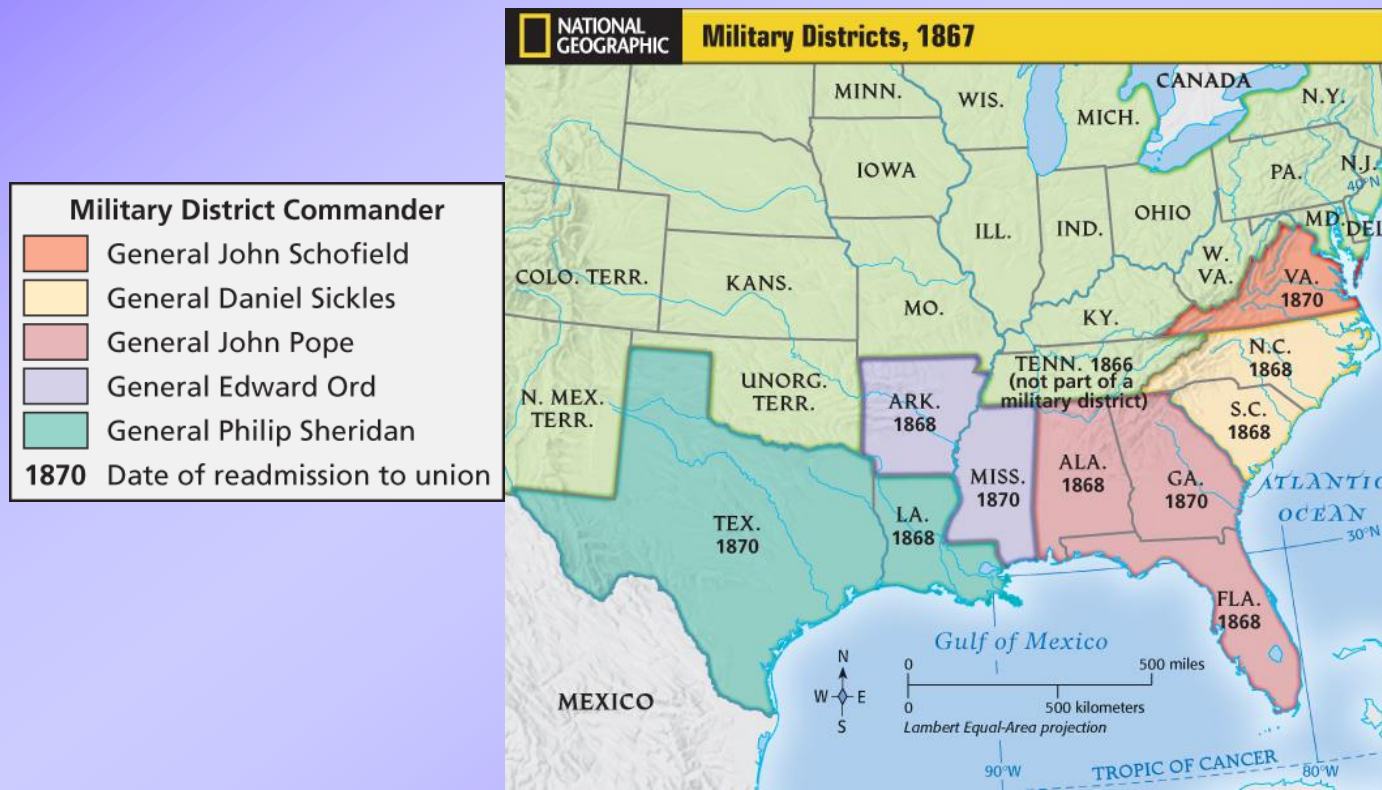


Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

- The new Southern governments began to pass **black codes**, which were a series of laws designed to keep African Americans in a state similar to slavery.
- The 14th Amendment was passed in response to the black codes (even though Johnson opposed it).
- Republicans won the vast majority of seats in Congress in the 1866 election and began to reverse many of Johnson's plans.

The Reconstruction Act

- In 1867, Congress passed this bill which divided the South into military districts: Southern states had to redesign their state constitutions to the approval of Congress



Black Political Participation During Reconstruction

- Military occupation of the South emboldened Blacks not only to vote but also to run for and be elected to office.
- About 2,000 Black Republican candidates won offices in local, state, and Congressional elections.
- The political power of Black Republicans in the South was brief and came to an end with the 1877 end of Reconstruction.

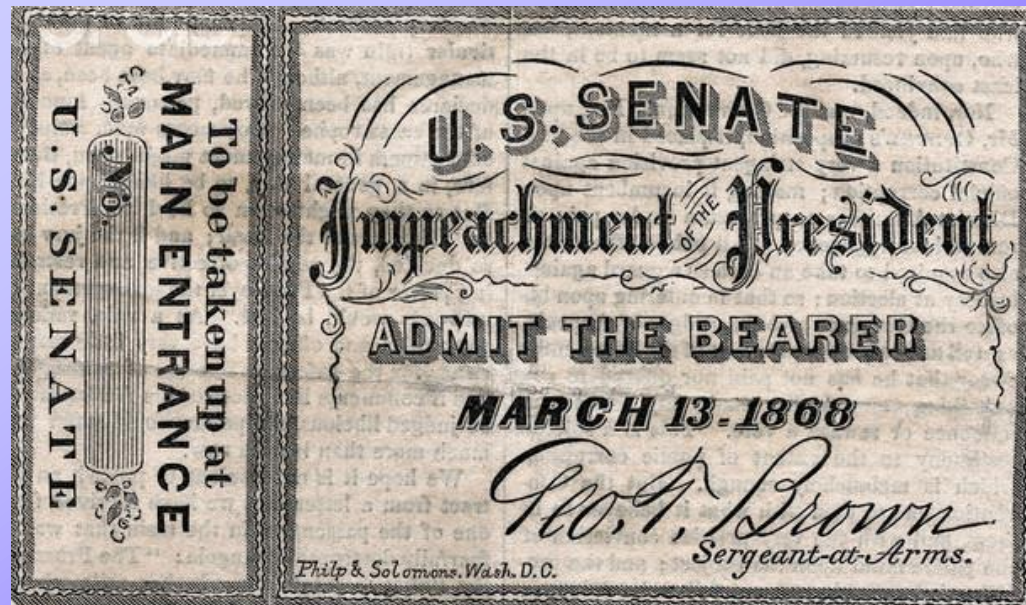
Johnson's Impeachment

- Congress tried to increase its power at the expense of the President by passing the following two bills:
 1. The Command of the Army Act required the President to pass all orders for the military through the General of the Army.
 2. The Tenure of Office Act required the President to get Congressional approval to fire any civil officials.

Johnson's Impeachment

- In defiance of Congress, Johnson fired Secretary of War Edwin Stanton
- Congress then impeached Johnson, charging him with refusing to uphold the law
- Congress came up one vote short of finding Johnson guilty
- Johnson remained President, but he did not run for re-election in 1868

Johnson was the first President to be impeached. Which other Presidents have been impeached?



The Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

- Formed in 1866 in an effort to:
 - rid the South of Union troops stationed in the military districts.
 - drive out Northern carpetbaggers
 - help the Democratic Party regain power in the South.
 - prevent freedmen from voting
- The KKK used terroristic tactics, intimidation and violence.
- The federal government passed the Enforcement Acts, including the Ku Klux Klan Act to outlaw their activities.



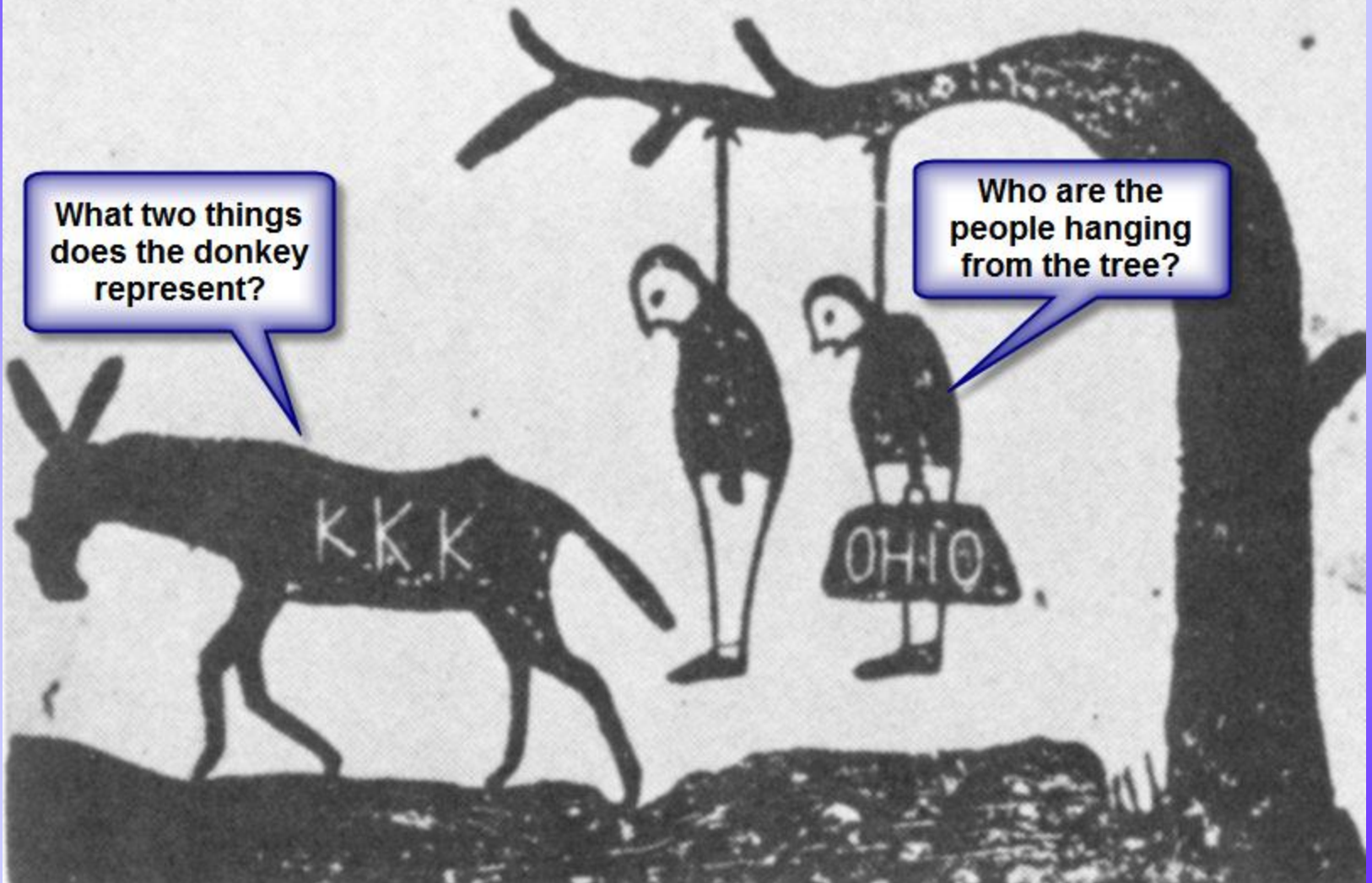
A Prospective Scene in the "City of Onka," 9th of March, 1808.



"Hark, wife, hark! * * * * * Their catastrophe is perfect gallows. Blat! fact, good fate, to their laughing! * * * * * [They be not here to be hanged, our own is miserable.]"

Interpreting a Political Cartoon

A PROSPECTIVE SCENE IN THE CITY OF OAKS, 4TH OF MARCH, 1869.



What two things does the donkey represent?

Who are the people hanging from the tree?

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Controversy in the Election of 1876

- Rutherford B. Hayes (R) ran against Samuel Tilden (D).
- A dispute over election returns (vote counts) in FL, LA and SC led congress to create a special commission to review election results.
- A majority of the commission were Republicans, who decided in favor of their candidate, Hayes.
- To appease the angry Democrats, the Compromise of 1877 was created.

Compromise of 1877

1. Republican candidate Hayes becomes President.
2. The army would be removed from the South.
3. The new government would give more aid to Southern states.
4. The Democrats in the South agreed to protect African Americans' rights.