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# Reconstruction

# Questions Facing the Union

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- There were a number of significant questions facing the US following the Civil War...
  - ***What to do with the four million freed blacks who were no longer slaves? What did the government even owe them, if anything at all?***
  - ***What to do with the South, whose entire way of life had just been shattered and whose resources were destroyed?***
  - ***What to do with the leaders and officers of the Confederacy, those men who had just led the rebellion?***

# New Life for “Former” Slaves?...

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- Many slaves were re-enslaved by their former masters as soon as Union soldiers left the area
- Many slaves felt a loyalty to their former owners and stayed on the farm to work
- Some slaves became destructive in their new freedom and destroyed private property of their former masters, getting them immediately into legal trouble...
- Many slave-owners simply resisted emancipation citing that no local laws had been passed to enforce it

# What to Do With Freedom?...

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- Most slaves traveled the roads after gaining their freedom, looking for lost loved ones that they had been separated from or traveling with their families and looking for a new place to live or work
- Blacks had been guaranteed some things under government terms of emancipation, things like education...

# The Freedman's Bureau

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- The Freedman's Bureau was set up in March 1863 in an effort to supply freed blacks with job skills and a basic education
  - It served as a kind of early welfare organization as it provided food, shelter, and medical aid to put displaced by the war (though this mostly consisted of freed blacks it did help a number of poor whites)

# The Taste of Freedom

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- ❖ ***Freedom of movement***: Enslaved people often walked away from plantations upon hearing that the Union army was near.
  - ***Exodusters***: moved to Kansas and Texas
- ❖ ***Freedom to own land***: Proposals to give white-owned land to freed people got little support from the government. Unofficial land redistribution did take place, however.
- ❖ ***Freedom to worship***: African Americans formed their own churches and started mutual aid societies, debating clubs, drama societies, and trade associations.
- ❖ ***Freedom to learn***: Between 1865 and 1870, black educators founded 30 African American colleges.

# Lincoln's Plans for Reconstruction

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- Lincoln felt that the nation could only be unified again if there were no feelings of animosity
- His plan was the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction (1863)
  - Pardons would be given to any Confederate leader who swore an oath to the Union and Constitution, and that also agreed to emancipation
  - Any state could be readmitted once at least 10% of its voters had sworn loyalty oaths
  - States also had to form new state constitutions that outlawed slavery

# Radical Reconstruction

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- Most Republicans in Congress, many of them Radicals, felt that Lincoln's plan was too lenient on the Southern Rebels...
- They proposed the Wade-Davis Bill in 1864
  - 50% of a state's voters had to swear oaths of loyalty to the Union
  - Only non-Confederates were allowed to vote and hold political offices
  - Lincoln refused to sign the bill stating that it was too harsh on the South...



# Andrew Johnson at the Helm

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- The irony of Andrew Johnson:
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> Reconstruction president was a Southern Democrat & fervent white supremacist
  - Johnson was elected as VP in 1864 to balance Lincoln's ticket
  - He was the only southern Senator to remain loyal to the Union & hated the South's gentry

*“Malice towards none and charity for all”*  
—Abraham Lincoln

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*“Every head of family in the  
United States should have one  
slave to take the drudgery and  
menial service off his family”*  
—Andrew Johnson

# Johnson's Reconstruction

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- At first Radicals were excited by Johnson's deep hatred of the planter class...
- To the surprise of all Johnson issued a Reconstruction plan very similar to that of Lincoln's original plan
  - It had the 10% clause for returning to the Union
  - It had the abolition of slavery clause for state constitutions
- Johnson also forgave the Confederate states of the war debts that they had incurred

# Johnson's Reconstruction

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- There was a difference in Johnson's plan
  - It disenfranchised (took political rights away) from Southerners who were
    - 1) former leaders of the Confederacy,
    - 2) owned more than \$20,000 in taxable property (the plantation class)
  - However, Johnson had the right to grant 'personal' pardons...
- \*\*\*Historians believe that Johnson did this to force the wealthy planters to travel to the White House and beg for forgiveness from Johnson, showing that he had gained ultimate power over those he hated...*

# The South Under Johnson

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- Within eight months all of the Confederate states had re-qualified to join the Union under Johnson's Reconstruction plan
  - They had ratified the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment (abolished slavery)
  - They had drafted state constitutions that stated secession was forbidden
- The Southern states did not include voting rights for freed blacks in their constitutions
- Former Confederate leaders were voted right back to Congress (i.e. the Confederate VP was elected as a Georgia senator, Alexander Stephens)

# A New Way to Control Freedmen...

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- The Southern states also began passing black codes to regain control of freed blacks
  - These codes were meant to restrict the freedoms of the freed blacks
  - Freed blacks could not rent or borrow money to purchase land
  - Freedmen were forced to sign labor contracts that were illegal to break
  - Blacks were not allowed many legal rights, such as testifying against whites in court

# Congress Takes Over

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- In December 1865 Johnson declared that the South had met all necessary demands
- Congress was disgusted with the situation
  - Their former enemies (the leaders of the Confederacy) had been elected to Congress
  - The Black Codes were restricting freed blacks
  - Since the South had seceded, northerners were passing bills that they had wanted to for decades, mostly bills that favored the North... (i.e. tariffs)

# Congress and Johnson Face Off

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- Johnson vetoed bills that extended the life of the Freedman's Bureau and a Civil Rights bill that would have given freed blacks full citizenship and privileges
- However, Republicans continued to gain more strength in Congress with the 1866 elections and they now had the necessary majority to override his vetoes



# Congressional Reconstruction

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- The Civil Rights Act of 1866
  - Gave citizenship to African Americans
  - Offered some protection against Black Codes
- There were still some fears that Democrats would overturn the Act if they regained power so they desired a more permanent solution  
→ an amendment

# Congressional Reconstruction

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## ○ The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment

- All people born in the US were full citizens
- All people that were naturalized (completed the immigration/citizenship process) were full citizens
- All US states were required to protect US citizens with full protection through the laws and the legal process
- Former Confederate leaders could no longer hold state or federal offices
- If a state denied people their voting rights, they lost representation in Congress

# Congressional Reconstruction

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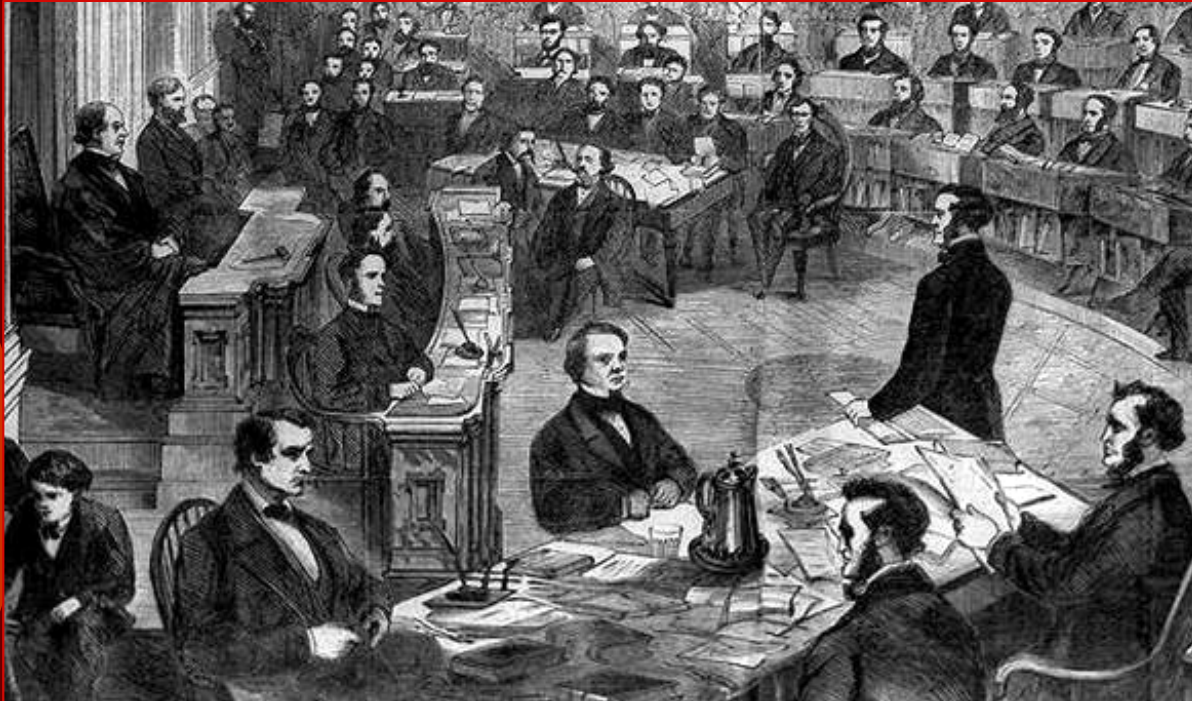
- The Reconstruction Acts of 1867
  - These stripped the Southern states of their political power and divided them into five military districts which were placed under the jurisdiction of the Union Army
  - They stated that, if a Southern state wanted to rejoin the Union, it had to ratify the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and create a state constitution that guaranteed all men the right to vote

# Congressional Reconstruction

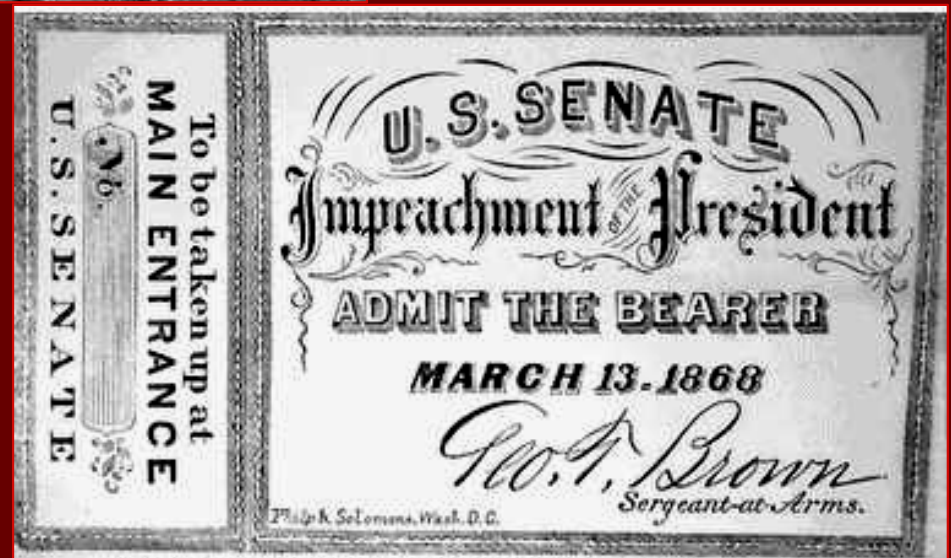
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- The Republicans did not stop at passing various bills and acts, but they even tried to impeach Johnson from office
  - Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act (the president could not remove some military officials without Congressional approval) to protect some Radical Republicans in Johnson's cabinet
  - Johnson went ahead and removed Secretary of War Edwin Stanton
  - The House impeached Johnson but the Senate fell one vote short → Johnson was now officially powerless...

# The Senate Trial



- ★ 11 week trial.
- ★ Johnson acquitted 35 to 19 (one short of required 2/3s vote).



# The Importance of the Freedmen Vote

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- The Election of 1868
  - The Democrats turned away from Johnson and chose Horatio Seymour
  - The Republicans chose the war hero US Grant, though he had no political experience whatsoever
  - Grant won the popular election by only 300,000 votes, and this is **INCREDIBLY SIGNIFICANT** considering that this included the 500,000 votes of the freed blacks, showing just how important their growing political power was...

# The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment

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- Recognizing from the Election of 1868 that they needed the African American vote to keep their power, Republicans quickly had the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment pushed through Congress
  - It prohibited any state from denying any citizen the right to vote, regardless of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude"
- The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment was actually incredibly unpopular in the North and won the Democratic party much needed northern support

# Life in the Reconstruction South

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- The South had been almost completely decimated by the Civil War
  - Its labor source was lost with the Emancipation
  - Its railroad system, though not as large as the North's, had been destroyed
  - While "marching to the sea", Sherman had destroyed much of the farmlands of the Deep South
  - 1 in 10 Southern men had been killed during the war



# Life in the Reconstruction South

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- The South was at the mercy of the North
  - Many northern treasury agents sent to the South to oversee Reconstruction worked as much for their own profit as they did for the South's
    - They placed lands under their own names and took taxes for their own profit
  - Southerners accused northerners who had gained political power of being corrupt and working against the South
    - Carpetbaggers – northerners who went South after the war to participate in Reconstruction government and business
    - Scalawags – southern Republicans who worked in post-war government and business efforts in the South

# Sharecropping: A New Slavery?

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- The Civil War destroyed Southern land, economy, & transportation
- Recovering meant finding a new labor system to replace slavery:
  - The South tried a contract-labor system but it was ineffective
  - Sharecropping “solved” the problem; black farmers worked on white planters’ land, but had to pay  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their crops

# A VICIOUS CYCLE OF DEBT

## ECONOMIC SLAVERY

1. Poor whites and freedmen have no jobs, no homes, and no money to buy land.

2. Landowners need laborers and have no money to pay laborers.

3. Hire poor whites and freedmen as laborers

•Sign contracts to work landlord's land in exchange for a part of the crop.

4. Landlord keeps track of the money that sharecroppers owe him for housing, food or local store.

5. At harvest time, the sharecropper is paid.

•Pays off debts.

•If sharecropper owes more to the landlord or store than his share of the crop is worth;

6. Sharecropper cannot leave the farm as long as he is in debt to the landlord.

# Life in the Reconstruction South

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- Many southern whites turned to violence in efforts to regain control of their governments
  - These violent acts were meant to intimidate freed blacks and also white Republicans from voting
  - The most famous of these was the Ku Klux Klan
  - Their efforts centered around the idea of 'Redemption', the end of Reconstruction

# The End of Reconstruction

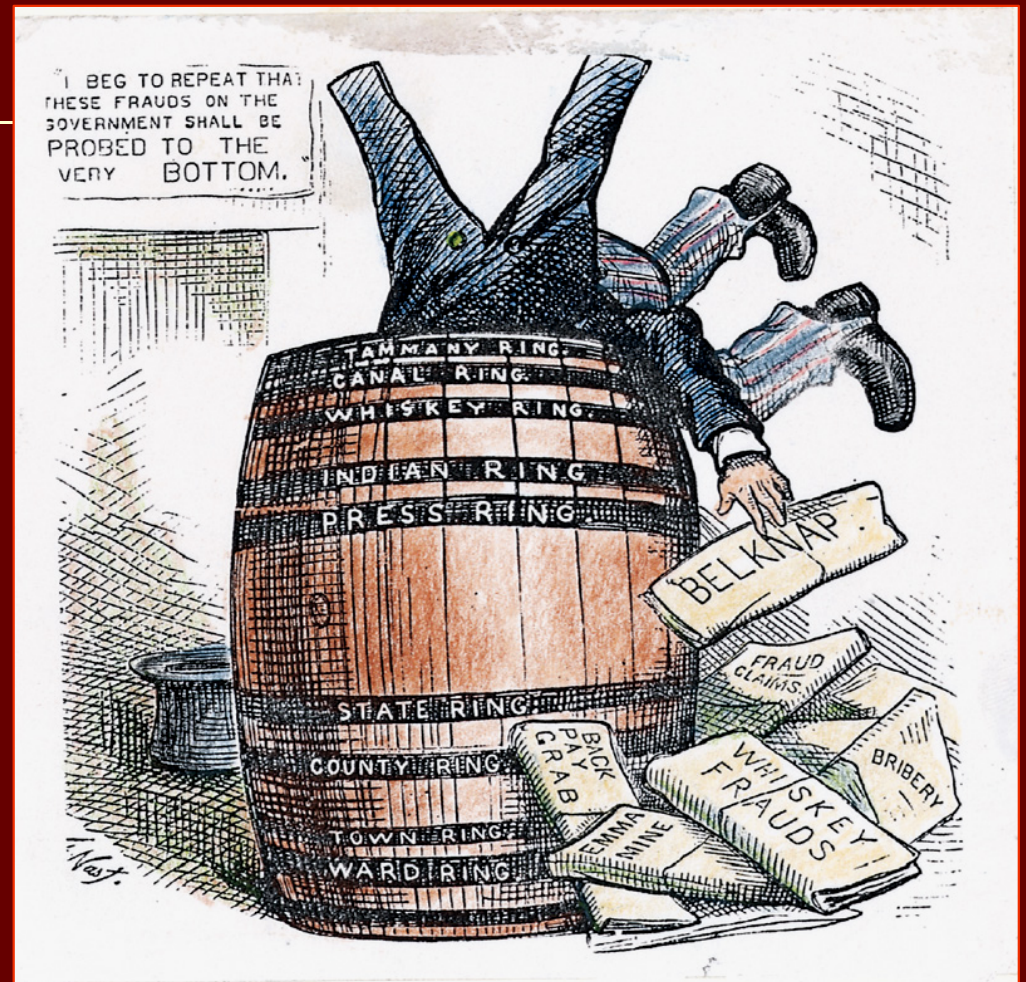
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- Though the Corrupt Bargain of 1877 is cited as the reason for Reconstruction ending, many factors played a role in the loss of northern interest in reforming the southern governments, though two reasons stand out most...
  - Political corruption
  - The Panic of 1873

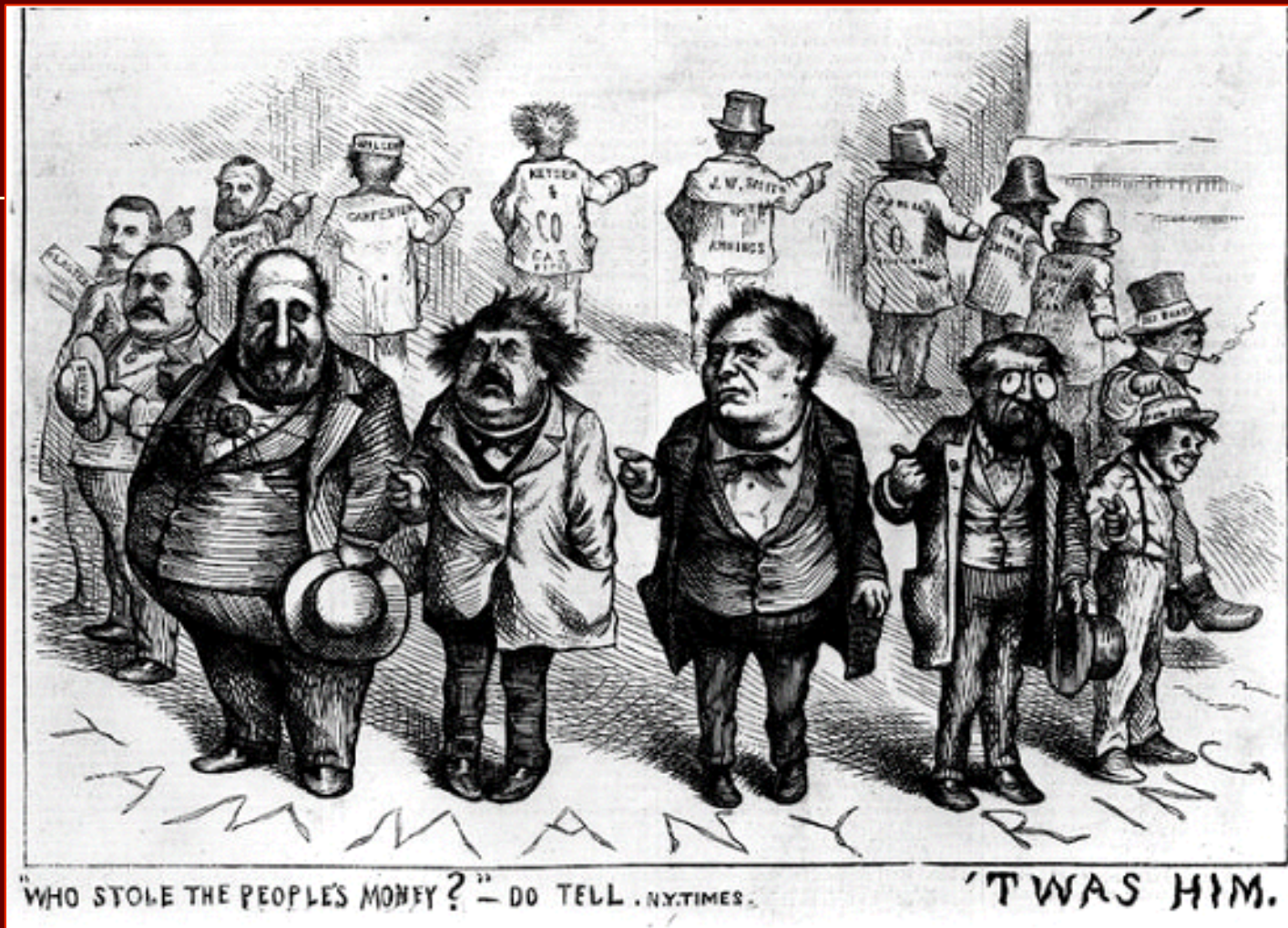
# Grant Administration Scandals

- ★ Grant presided over an era of unprecedented growth and corruption.

- ★ Credit Mobilier Scandal.
- ★ Whiskey Ring.
- ★ The "Indian Ring."



# *Who Stole the People's Money?*



# The End of Reconstruction

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- Political corruption under Grant
  - Though Grant was almost surely innocent in the following cases of government scandals, his greatest fault was in naively hiring men who were prone to dishonesty, men whom he considered loyal friends
  - The “Black Friday” Scandal
    - Jim Fiske and Jay Gould tried to corner the gold market by convincing Grant to stop the sale of the nation’s gold → he realized too late what had happened



# The End of Reconstruction

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- Political corruption under Grant
  - Credit Mobilier Scandal
    - Officials of the Union Pacific Railroad were given money by the government to build a railroad
    - The officials created a fake construction company which they stashed the government money into, and all the while bribing government officers to say nothing
  - “Salary Grab Act”
    - In 1873 Congress voted for very large increases in salary for the president and all congressmen
    - Public outrage allowed the Democrats to gain control of the government in the next elections

# The End of Reconstruction

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- Political corruption under Grant
  - The Whiskey Ring Scandal
    - Makers of whiskey and government treasury officials embezzled millions of dollars from excise taxes on whiskey, and some of Grant's closest friends (and even his secretary) were involved in the scandal
    - This was the only case in which Grant was almost found to be involved in a scandal, as he had naively accepted bribes from corrupt agents believing that they were 'perks' of being the president

# The End of Reconstruction

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## ○ The Financial Crisis of 1873

- The Civil War had caused a major economic boom in the North, and after the war industrialists continued to expand despite the fact there was no longer a major demand for their goods → this caused many of these companies to fire a large number of workers and lead to major increases in unemployment
- The nation was gripped by inflation as Grant and his advisors were unsure of what to do with the large amount of unbacked paper currency created during the Civil War

# The End of Reconstruction

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## ○ The Financial Crisis of 1873

- Grant decided to leave the money situation as it was in order to see what happened...
- After the Panic hit in 1873, mainly because of industrial overproduction, Congress removed silver as a form of currency, and this led to many in the lower classes no longer being able to pay their debts
  - This was known as “the Crime of ‘73” by pro-inflationers

# The End of Reconstruction

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- The Financial Crisis of 1873
  - Congress made the situation worse by further deflating (making there be even less money) the economy when they passed the Specie Resumption Act of 1875
    - This stated that everyone would have to turn in their paper money for gold → paper money that was greatly depreciated by the Crisis
  - No longer able to make their payments on their farms and homes many in the wage-earning class and many farmers lost their property, and many banks went bankrupt because of the large number of defaulted loans

# The End of Reconstruction

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- The Election of 1876
  - The Democrats, campaigning against corruption and the weak economy, chose Samuel Tilden
  - The Republicans chose Rutherford Hayes
    - They urged the public to “vote the way that they had shot”, meaning that they should remember the Civil War and vote Republican → this was called “waving the bloody shirt”...

# The End of Reconstruction

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- The Democrats and Tilden won both the popular vote and also the electoral vote, 184 to 165
  - **HOWEVER**, 185 electoral votes were needed for Tilden to have the necessary majority vote and the victory in the election, and there were 20 disputed electoral votes from Union-occupied Southern states (which Tilden would surely have won as Democrat)...

# Reunion and the New South

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- North and South reconcile after 1877
- Terms of reconciliation
  - African Americans stripped of political gains
  - big business interests favored over small farmer



# “Redeeming” a *New South*

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- Southern "Redeemers" favor commerce, manufacturing over agriculture
- Gain power by doctrine of white supremacy
- Neglect problems of small farmers

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## **Two ways to examine the claims of a “New South”:**

**1. Economically**

**2. Race Relations**

# 1. Economically

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- **Three major industries emerged in the South after the Civil War:**
  - Cotton
  - Iron
  - Tobacco

# Cotton:

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- In the 1870s a "cotton crusade" began.
- Initial attempts to encourage construction of Southern mills with Southern finance capital gave way to a mill industry (1880 - 160 mills; 1900 - 400+mills), largely controlled by outside (Northeastern United States and foreign) capitalists.
- Racist hiring practices dominated employment in the new industry.

# Iron and Steel:

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- Southerners tapped rich coal and iron ore reserves so effectively that by 1900, the South led the world in coal production.
- At the same time, they fostered (1880-1900) tremendous growth in iron and steel mills.
- Initial financing of the steel and iron industries came from Southern sources, but by 1900, foreign investors and Northerners such as Andrew Carnegie largely controlled these industries.

# Tobacco:

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- Traditionally tobacco was grown but seldom processed in the South.
- In the late 1870s and early 1880s, however, Southern capitalists established prosperous tobacco factories. (Duke family)
- By 1900, tobacco processing was a major industry.
- As was the case with cotton and iron/steel, outside capitalists controlled the industry.

## 2. Race Relations: The Rise of Jim Crow

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- **"Jim Crow" laws**

- a system of laws ensuring social segregation in transportation, accommodations, schools, courts, etc. which arose in every Southern state.

# The Rise of Jim Crow

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- Redeemer Democrats systematically exclude black voters
- Jim Crow laws legalize segregation and restrict black civil rights
- By 1910 the process was complete
- The North and the federal government did little or nothing to prevent it

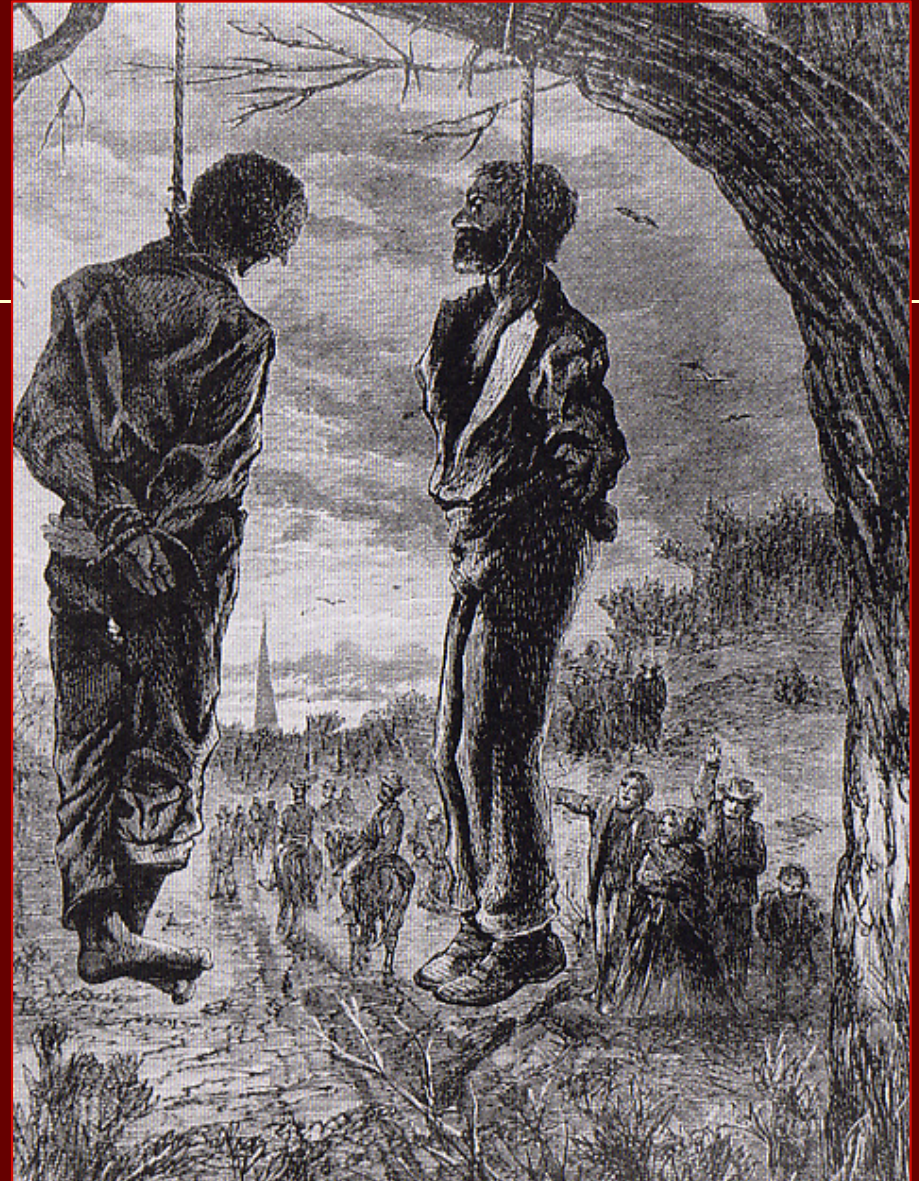
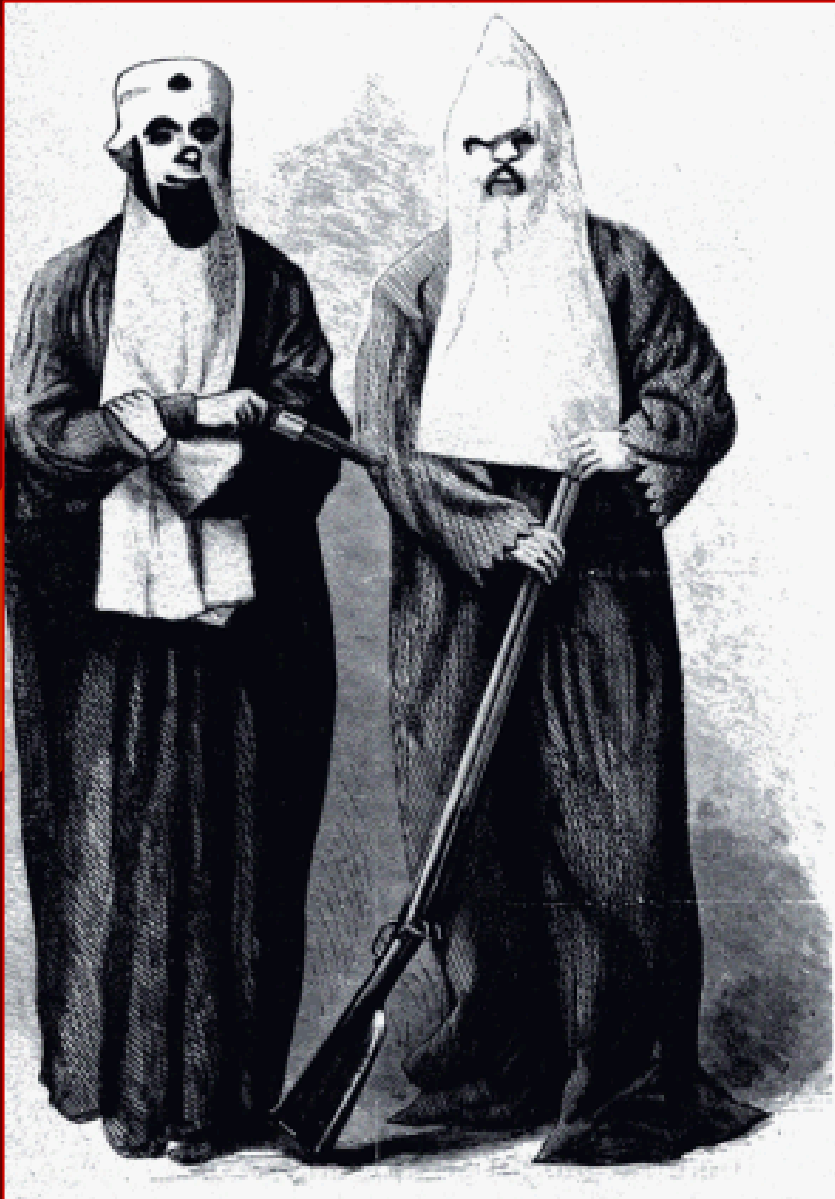


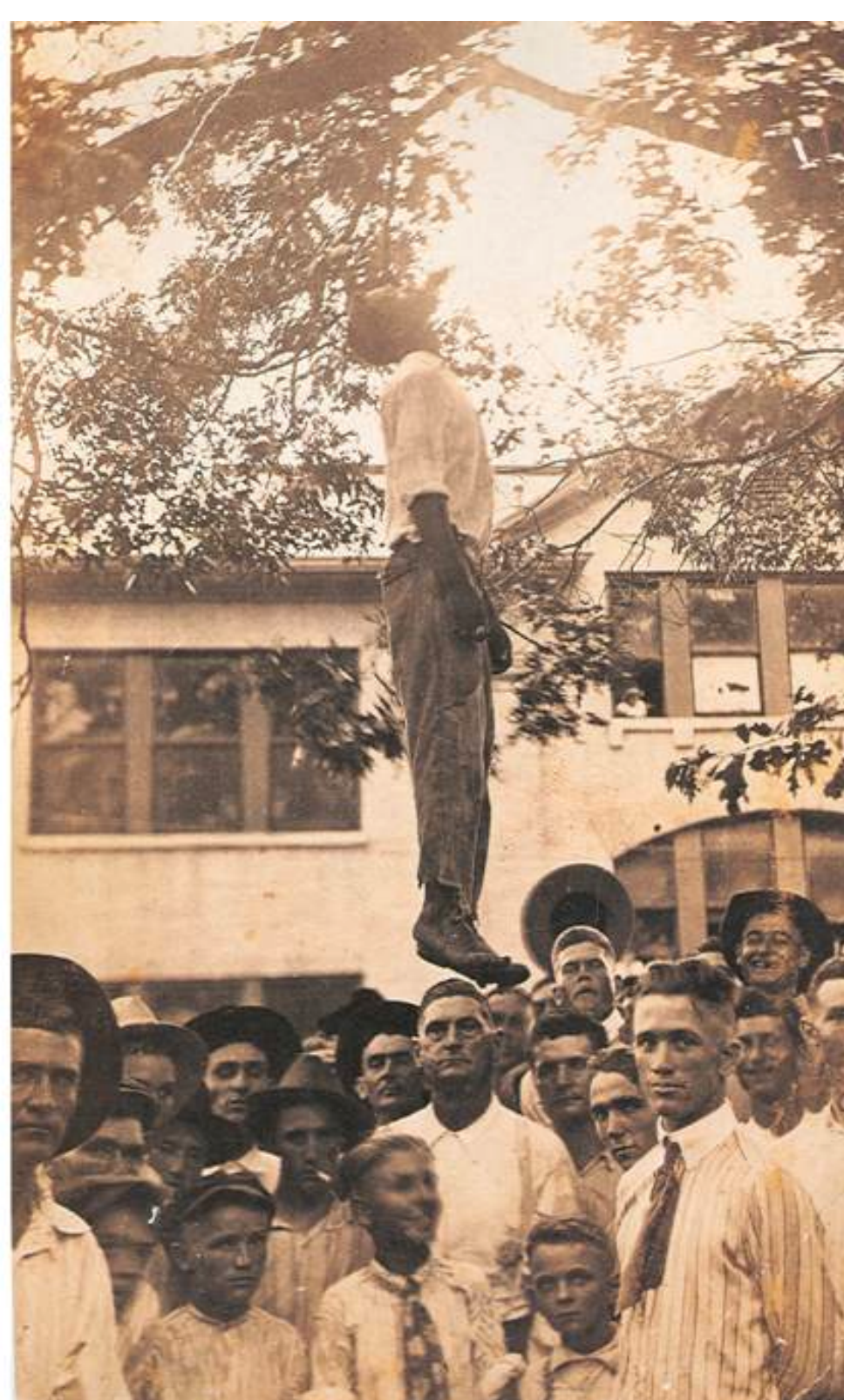
# The Rise of Jim Crow

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- Lynching—187 blacks lynched yearly 1889-1899
- U.S. Supreme Court decisions gut Reconstruction Amendments 1875-1896
- “Reunion” accomplished as North tacitly acquiesces in Southern discrimination

# The "Invisible Empire of the South"





## Civil Rights Setbacks in the Supreme Court

<b>Date</b>	<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>Ruling</b>
1873	<i>Slaughterhouse cases</i>	Most civil rights were ruled to be state, rather than federal, rights and therefore unprotected by the Fourteenth Amendment.
1876	<i>U.S. v. Cruikshank</i>	The Fourteenth Amendment was ruled not to grant the federal government power to punish whites who oppressed blacks.
1876	<i>U.S. v. Reese</i>	The Fifteenth Amendment was determined not to grant voting rights to anyone, but rather to restrict types of voter discrimination.

# Race Relations

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- **"Mississippi Plan"**
  - In 1890, Mississippi's new state constitution banned blacks from voting and office holding in order to "purify" Mississippi politics.

# Race Relations

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## ○ **"Grandfather Clause"**

- Many Southerners and Northerners alike had made challenges against property and literacy tests, claiming that states were using them as a way to prevent blacks (and many poor whites) from voting.
- In 1898, Louisiana responded to these challenges by legislating the so-called "Grandfather Clause" which stated that voting tests would not apply to voters whose fathers or grandfathers were registered voters on January 1, 1867, when no black man in the state was registered to vote.

# Race Relations

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## ○ ***Plessy v. Ferguson***

- In 1896, the United States Supreme Court ruled, in a 7-1 vote, that "separate but equal" accommodations on railroad cars conformed to the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection.
- That decision was used to justify segregating all public facilities, including schools. Most school districts, ignoring Plessy's "equal" requirement, neglected their black schools.
- This ruling held until 1954 when in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the Supreme Court ruled that separate institutions are inherently unequal.

# Successes and Failures of Reconstruction

<u>Successes</u>	<u>Failures</u>
Union is restored.	Many white southerners bitter towards US govt. & Republicans.
South's economy grows and new wealth is created in the North.	The South is slow to industrialize.
14 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> amendments guarantee Blacks the rights of citizenship, equal protection under the law, and suffrage.	After US troops are withdrawn, southern state governments and terrorist organizations effectively deny Blacks the right to vote.
Freedmen's Bureau and other organizations help many black families obtain housing, jobs, and schooling.	Many black and white southerners remain caught in a cycle of poverty.
Southern states adopt a system of mandatory education.	Racist attitudes toward African Americans continue, in both the South and the North.