

**Republican Party Politics and the American South:  
From Reconstruction to Redemption, 1865-1880**

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We examine the development of a Republican South after the Civil War. Republican leaders were initially resistant to the creation of Southern wing of the party, mainly because moderate members believed that enfranchising blacks – a necessary condition for the creation of a Southern GOP – was too radical for the Northern public to accept. They only came around to the idea reluctantly, after President Andrew Johnson broke with the Republicans on Reconstruction and the protection of black civil rights – and the Northern public sided with the GOP in the elections of 1866. Once invested in the notion of creating a Southern wing, Republican leaders stacked the deck – dividing the South into military districts, enfranchising blacks, and requiring the drafting of new constitutions before states would be readmitted to the Union – which led to some initial Republican electoral successes in the former Confederacy. These successes were not sustainable, however, despite strong and loyal black support, as a consistent proportion of white Southerners could not be persuaded to vote Republican. Without a true bi-racial foundation, the Southern wing of the GOP – confronted with violence and intimidation by whites working on behalf of the Democrats, as well as intra-party conflict – steadily collapsed, as Republican politicians were increasingly driven from power. By 1877, white Southern Democrats had effectively “redeemed” all of the former Confederacy states, and Reconstruction – despite its very real achievements – had come to an end.

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## Introduction

The decade and a half following the Civil War was a truly eventful time for the Republican Party in the South.<sup>1</sup> In that relatively short period, Southern Republican fortunes changed dramatically, as the party went from being effectively non-existent in the war's immediate aftermath, to being electorally supreme across much of the former Confederacy during the late-1860s and early-1870s, to being driven into minority status in all of the Reconstructed states by the late-1870s. Undergirding that electoral roller coaster ride was a genuine revolutionary experience, as the Southern GOP emerged and developed as a mixed-race coalition – with blacks (the majority of whom were former slaves) and whites (both Southern-born and Northern expatriates) coalescing into a fragile but hopeful partnership – in a region that had been built around slavery and white supremacy. By 1880, that hope had been largely extinguished, as the traditional “White South” (as embodied in the Democratic Party) had regained control of all state governments in the former Confederacy.

The contours of Republican Party development in the South along with the legitimate successes that were achieved for black citizens and black civil rights more generally, we contend, requires more intensive examination. For example, how a Republican South came to be – as a *political strategy* – is not widely known. In fact, for a time after the war, the majority of Republicans in Congress did not consider building a Southern wing to be a realistic endeavor. It only became the party's plan of action because of other political and electoral events. In addition, understanding why the Republicans' “grand experiment” in the South failed – and why it failed in different states at different times – also deserves greater attention. Finally, how the GOP's

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<sup>1</sup> The single best general account of Southern Reconstruction is Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row). Other, more specialized accounts will be noted, as they pertain to events covered.

racial structure at the *elite level* developed by state across the Reconstruction era has received little systematic scholarly consideration. These inquiries form the basis of this paper.

We focus first on the development of a Republican South after the Civil War. As we discuss, Republican leaders were resistant to the creation of Southern wing of the party, mainly because moderate members believed that enfranchising blacks – a necessary condition for the creation of a Southern GOP – was too radical for the Northern public to accept. They only came around to the idea reluctantly, after President Andrew Johnson broke with the Republicans on Reconstruction and the protection of black civil rights – and the Northern public sided with the GOP in the elections of 1866. Once invested in the notion of creating a Southern wing, Republican leaders stacked the deck – dividing the South into military districts, enfranchising blacks, and requiring the drafting of new constitutions before states would be readmitted to the Union – which led to some initial Republican electoral successes in the former Confederacy. These successes were not sustainable, however, despite strong and loyal black support, as a consistent proportion of white Southerners could not be persuaded to vote Republican. Without a true bi-racial foundation, the Southern wing of the GOP – confronted with violence and intimidation by whites working on behalf of the Democrats, as well as intra-party conflict – steadily collapsed, as Republican politicians were increasingly driven from power. By 1877, white Southern Democrats had effectively “redeemed” all of the former Confederacy states, and Reconstruction – despite its very real achievements, like the wealth of office holding experience it afforded black citizens (many of whom were former slaves) – had come to an end.

### **A Republican South?**

In the wake of the Civil War, two prominent questions were at the forefront of national policy making: (1) how would the conquered states of the Confederacy be reintegrated into the

Union (or how would reconciliation between North and South be achieved)?; and (2) who would be in charge of critical decision making? Indeed, answers to those questions had been proposed and debated by Northern politicians even before the war had been won.

### Lincoln's Plan and Republican Reactions in Congress

As early as 1861, President Lincoln had outlined a plan for “restoration,” which left the decision to pro-Union loyalists in the states themselves; in doing so, he sought to avoid federal guidelines and allow the states to manage the task of returning to the fold.<sup>2</sup> By late 1863, he laid out more specifics – amnesty would be provided to Confederate supporters who pledged allegiance to the United States and agreed to support federal decisions with regard to emancipation. When the number of voting-age males taking the oath of allegiance achieved 10 percent of the number of votes cast in the 1860 presidential election, the state would be ready to form a state government that could then be organized for purposes of federal recognition. A return to the Union would then follow.

Lincoln's plan was meant to restore the ex-Confederate states to the Union as quickly as possible. And it was clear that he envisioned white-only governments to form; while he insisted that states explicitly abolish slavery in their new constitutions as a precondition for readmittance, for example, he also placed the onus of decision-making – including rebuilding social and economic arrangements in the states – in whites' hands. Republicans in Congress had other ideas, however. Led by Radicals in both chambers, the majority Republicans sought more stringent terms for readmission, which included a stronger federal (Congressional) role in

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<sup>2</sup> Lincoln's views on Reconstruction, along with Congressional Republicans' reactions to them, are covered in Herman Belz, *Reconstructing the Union: Theory and Policy during the Civil War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969); Michael Les Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle: Congressional Republicans and Reconstruction, 1863-1869* (New York: Norton, 1974); William C. Harris, *With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997); Paul D. Escott, *Lincoln's Dilemma: Blair, Sumner, and the Republican Struggle over Racism and Equality in the Civil War Era* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).

Reconstruction policy, the confiscation of slaveholders' land, and permanent rights restrictions for most whites who actively participated in the Confederacy.

As Lincoln's popularity plummeted in the spring of 1864, the Radicals were emboldened and sought to up the ante with legislation. In July, the Wade-Davis bill – named after Senator Ben Wade (R-OH) and Representative Henry Winter Davis (R-MD) – passed, and stipulated that Congress (and not the president) was in charge of Reconstruction and 50 percent of a state's white voting population was required to take an oath of allegiance (not the 10 percent under Lincoln's plan) before procedures for executive recognition and a return to the Union were operable. Such procedures included the calling of constitutional conventions and the drafting of new constitutions that proscribed both slavery and the ability of high-ranking civilian and military Confederates to vote or hold political office. Additional provisions would make it difficult for many white Southerners (i.e., those who supported secession and the Confederacy) to participate in the constitutional conventions, which would thereby tilt political control in the states toward Union loyalists.

Lincoln considered the Wade-Davis bill to be extreme and punitive, and refused to sign it – and since there were fewer than ten days left in the congressional session when it passed, Lincoln's inaction resulted in a "pocket veto." This was effectively where the issue of reconciliation/reconstruction stood at the time of Lincoln's assassination in April 1865, just after the 38th Congress (1863-65) adjourned.<sup>3</sup> At that point, Union loyalists in four southern states (Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia) had established new governments in line with Lincoln's conditions and sought to rejoin the Union – only to be rebuffed by the Republican-controlled Congress.

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<sup>3</sup> Despite continued disagreements, the Republicans had downplayed and avoided intra-party conflicts in the months leading up to the November 1864 elections.

## Johnson's Plan and Republican Reactions in Congress

Andrew Johnson (a War Democrat from Tennessee) ascended to the presidency after Lincoln's death, and his plan for sectional reconciliation was more in line with Lincoln's than that of congressional Republicans.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Johnson took advantage of Congress's adjournment – the 39th Congress would not officially convene until December 1865, and he had no intention of calling them into special session beforehand – to take control of Reconstruction's direction.

Johnson sought a swift sectional reconciliation, and envisioned white-led governments in the South voluntarily making arrangements (per certain conditions) to rejoin the Union. He anticipated Lincoln-like oaths and constitutional conventions that would only allow whites to participate. Johnson did specify amnesty in a more narrow way, however, and sought to eliminate the antebellum planter elite (through political-rights restrictions and property confiscation) from regaining governmental control. More generally, Johnson imagined a political realignment occurring, wherein extreme elements (Southern secessionists and Northern Copperheads on one side, and Radical Republicans and punitive Southern Unionists on the other) would be marginalized and a new party of the center (which would include pro-War Northern Democrats and moderate Republicans, along with border-state Unionists and anti-secession Southerners) would be created that would reelect him president in 1868. Key to this realignment

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<sup>4</sup> Lincoln's views on Reconstruction, along with Congressional Republicans' reactions to them, are covered in Eric L. McKittrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Michael Les Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle: Congressional Republicans and Reconstruction, 1863-1869* (New York: Norton, 1974); Foner, *Reconstruction*, Chapter 5; Hans L. Trefousse, *Andrew Johnson: A Biography* (New York: Norton, 1997).

plan was a moderate South, “chastened” in defeat, which would rejoin the Union and provide him with a base of electoral support from which he could build his broader “Union Party.”<sup>5</sup>

Johnson’s plan dissolved through the remainder of 1865, however, as Southern state conventions and governments proved recalcitrant in the war’s aftermath. Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas all adopted new constitutions and organized new state governments (joining Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia from the Lincoln era), and elected new U.S. representatives and senators. However, the white Southerners who formed the conventions and new state governments departed from Johnson’s (and Republican) wishes in a variety of ways – such as failing to ratify the 13th Amendment (and thus accept the end of slavery), nullify prior secession ordinances, and/or repudiate the Confederate debt, while electing some candidates who were prominent Confederates (and thus were not granted amnesty).<sup>6</sup>

Once in place, these white-dominated state governments sought to create a new social order in the South, mirroring the “white supremacy” of the antebellum era while acknowledging the reality of the 13th Amendment. Wealthy planters worked to keep black labor in place, first through threats and violence and then through more legal maneuvers. Specifically, so-called Black Codes were passed in most Southern states in 1865-66 (with Mississippi, South Carolina, and Alabama leading the way in 1865), which restricted the rights of blacks and strongly incentivized them to return to plantation work (through draconian vagrancy laws and a penal

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<sup>5</sup> LaWanda Cox and John H. Cox, *Politics, Principle, and Prejudice, 1865-1866: Dilemma of Reconstruction* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1963).

<sup>6</sup> See Michael Perman, *Reunion without Compromise The South and Reconstruction, 1865-1868* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Dan T. Carter, *When the War Was Over: The Failure of Self-Reconstruction in the South, 1865-1867* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985).

code that promoted peonage and convict leasing).<sup>7</sup> While many provisions of the Black Codes were vetoed by Union military commanders associated with the Freedmen's Bureau, their passage signaled a white South that was defiant in the wake of military defeat.

The Northern public was horrified by these developments, and Republicans in Congress responded in kind. Arguing that Southern governments were trying to nullify the Union victory – and thereby dishonor the memory of the Northern troops who sacrificed their lives to make Union victory possible – Republican legislators sought to prevent Johnson's Reconstruction policy from taking effect. They made their move at the opening of the 39th Congress in December. Under instructions from Rep. Thaddeus Stevens (R-PA), Edward McPherson, the Clerk of the U.S. House and a Stevens protégé, skipped over the names of Southern representatives when calling the roll of members elect, thereby invalidating their election credentials.<sup>8</sup> Shortly thereafter, a Joint Committee of Fifteen (six from the Senate, nine from the House) was appointed to investigate conditions in the former Confederacy and advise on the issue of Southern representation in the Senate. In early 1866, the Committee began collecting testimony from witnesses regarding civil atrocities that occurred in the South in prior months;<sup>9</sup> at the same time, Republicans took the lead in offering a congressional response to Johnson, one that would guarantee rights and protections for blacks in the hostile Southern environment.

### 1866: A Year of Institutional Conflict

The Republicans' efforts to revise Johnson's Reconstruction plan was based on two bills drawn up in the Senate Judiciary Committee: (1) a measure that extended the life of the

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<sup>7</sup> On the Black Codes, see Theodor B. Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1965); Eric Foner, *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> Trefousse, *Andrew Johnson*, 174-76; Jeffery A. Jenkins and Charles Stewart III, *Fighting for the Speakership: The House and the Rise of Party Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 252.

<sup>9</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 239, 246-47.

Freedman's Bureau and expanded its authority and activities and (2) a civil rights bill that provided national citizenship to all persons born in the United States (except Indians) without regard to race, enumerated specific rights such citizens enjoyed, and provided federal protection of those rights. Moderate forces in the GOP shaped each bill, as Radicals' hope of a more extreme response – one that included some form of black suffrage – was rejected. Each bill was consistent with Republican Party philosophy and public positions, and few GOP members of Congress felt that Johnson would take any issue with them. Indeed, Johnson was consulted prior to the drafting of the bills, and he gave no indication of resistance.<sup>10</sup>

On February 19, 1866, Johnson vetoed the Freedmen's Bureau bill, based on a variety of arguments: that the Bureau had served its purpose and was no longer needed; that the bill as written was unconstitutional (imposing military jurisdiction when civil courts were available); and that such decisions should not be made while a segment of the country (the eleven states of the former Confederacy) was without representation in Congress. Republicans were shocked by Johnson's actions, and they were unable to muster the votes to override his veto.<sup>11</sup>

While Radicals saw Johnson's veto as a "declaration of war," moderate elements in the party wanted to tread lightly. While they believed the Freedman's Bureau was an invaluable institution, they were also aware that powerful forces in the country – bankers and merchants – opposed it, based on a belief that it made commerce more difficult.<sup>12</sup> Moderate Republicans, at their core, were pragmatists. They believed in establishing a constructive and protected environment in the South for the Freedmen, but were ever vigilant in tracking northern public

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<sup>10</sup> David Herbert Donald, Jean Harvey Baker, and Michael F. Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Norton), 530-32; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 246-47. In July, a second (slightly modified) Freedman's Bureau bill passed over Johnson's veto.

<sup>11</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 247-49.

<sup>12</sup> As Eric Foner states, such interests charged the Bureau with "interfering with the plantation discipline essential for a revival of cotton production." Foner, *Reconstruction*, 249.

opinion. Johnson remained popular, despite his recent actions, and his goal of initiating a realignment of the parties frightened many moderate Republicans.

These fears aside, moderate Republicans joined with Radicals in their support of a civil rights bill. Both sets of Republicans believed that the guarantees of equal rights and accompanying federal protections inherent in the bill were necessary to safeguard the lives of the Freedmen and (relatedly, and perhaps more importantly) honor the sacrifices made by Northern soldiers (and their families) during the war. To allow the South to effectively create a racial caste system would surrender the fruits of victory and invalidate the moral basis of the war. On this, moderate Republicans believed they were on safe footing with their constituents back home. And they hoped Johnson would see things the same way.<sup>13</sup>

On March 27, 1866, Johnson followed his Freedman's Bureau veto with a veto of the civil rights bill. He argued that the bill was unconstitutional, as it extended the jurisdiction of federal courts into an area where states were supreme. More generally, Johnson saw the bill as the first salvo in a great "centralization effort" (or federal encroachment into local affairs). He thus set himself up as the champion of states' right and limited government – and, indirectly, of white supremacy in the South.

Congressional Republicans attempted to override Johnson's civil rights veto – and unlike their effort on the Freedmen's Bureau bill, this time they were victorious.<sup>14</sup> The successful override demonstrated that Congress could in fact set the tone for Reconstruction – and, in fact, would for the foreseeable future. Moreover, it signaled a clear rift between the president and the

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<sup>13</sup> On the thinking and beliefs of moderate Republicans, see Foner, *Reconstruction*, 241-43. On the degree to which Reconstruction policy was shaped by moderates with an eye toward their Northern constituencies, see William Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction, 1869-1879* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979). On the moderates relationship with Radicals in the GOP, see Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle*.

<sup>14</sup> The Senate override vote was 33-15, while the House override vote was 122-41. The earlier votes to pass the bill were 33-12 in the House and 111-38 in the Senate.

Congress. While moderate Republicans may have wanted to avoid a public break with Johnson, his actions forced the issue and presented the public with broad and differing positions that they would have to evaluate in advance of the Fall elections.

While the Republicans were fighting to enact the Freedmen's Bureau and civil rights bills, the Joint Committee of Fifteen was designing a constitutional amendment to govern the means by which the Southern states would be restored to the Union. Both Radicals and moderates felt that this was necessary, given the lax terms that Johnson had laid out. The two factions disagreed, however, as to how stringent the provisions in the amendment should be – and after some internal politicking, the amendment tilted more in a moderate direction. Both Radicals and moderates approved of the first and fourth sections – the first mirrored the recent Civil Rights Act of 1866, by protecting the (civil) rights of all citizens, with guarantees of due process and equal protection of the laws, while the fourth repudiated all Confederate debt – but locked horns over the second and third. The third prevented any Confederate supporter, who prior to 1861 had held any United States office that required an oath of allegiance, from holding any state or national office. Radicals thought that these individuals should also have their voting rights stripped, but moderates disagreed – and their position won out.

The intra-party disagreement over the second section of what became the 14th Amendment was the most heated, and it foreshadowed decisions that would be made in subsequent years. With the abolition of slavery (via adoption of the 13th Amendment) came the elimination of the 3/5ths clause provision in the Constitution. As a result, the black population in the South would be fully counted toward Southern states' representation in the U.S. House and Electoral College. Neither moderates nor Radicals wanted the Democrats to benefit from this increase, but they disagreed on how to respond. Radicals wanted blacks enfranchised, which

would give them the ability to represent themselves. Moderates were not willing to support black suffrage – fearing that their Northern constituents would consider such a move to be too radical – and instead preferred language that would strip states of representation (on a proportionate basis) if any adult, male citizens were denied the right to vote. From the Radicals’ perspective, this language provided the white South with a license to discriminate as long as they were willing to accept the accompanying representational penalty.<sup>15</sup>

The Republicans – via the Joint Committee of Fifteen – pursued a constitutional amendment (rather than a statute) to more permanently embed civil rights protections and other Reconstruction policies in the body politic. Should temporary Democratic majorities emerge at some point in the future, for example, they would not be able to erase the Republicans’ policies with basic legislation. And, in June, the 14th Amendment received the necessary 2/3rds vote in both chambers.<sup>16</sup> An accompanying bill to tie ratification of the 14th Amendment to a return to the Union (and representation in the House and Senate) was debated but not passed. While Tennessee ratified the 14th Amendment in July 1866, and subsequently regained its congressional representation in a week’s time, Republicans (led by the Radicals) were unwilling at that point to make it a binding precedent.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, as the 1866 elections approached, the Republicans’ *partisan* view of the South was conflicted. While Radicals had been pushing for black suffrage, which would have been a step toward making the GOP a truly national party, the moderates were unwilling to go along. As David Donald, Jean Harvey Baker, and Michael F. Holt argue: “In 1866... Moderates had no intention of building a southern wing of the Republican party based on black votes. Rather, they

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<sup>15</sup> Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 545-46.

<sup>16</sup> The vote was 33-11 in the Senate (June 8, 1866) and 138-36 in the House (June 13, 1866).

<sup>17</sup> The 14th Amendment was ratified by the requisite 3/4 of the states (28 in all) in July 1868, and officially became part of the Constitution.

would protect the fruits of northern victory by reducing the South's potential power in national politics and preserve federalism to boot by stopping Radicals from nationalizing suffrage standards."<sup>18</sup> The moderates' view on these matters would change in short order.

### The 1866 Elections

The 1866 congressional elections would be a referendum on the course of Reconstruction policy, as Johnson and the Republicans in Congress framed it in very different terms. Johnson argued that the Republican Congress was standing in the way of a speedy sectional reconciliation and pursuing unconstitutional actions in order to favor blacks at the expense of whites. Republicans countered that their actions were intended to protect the country's hard-won achievements in the war and ensure that the Freedmen were afforded their basic rights as U.S. citizens.

In the wake of his two vetoes (one of which was overridden) and the passage of the 14th Amendment, Johnson went "all in" on his party realignment strategy. He called for a National Union convention to meet in August in Philadelphia, and hoped to use it as a springboard to build his broad, centrist coalition. However, aligning the different partisan types proved harder than he had anticipated – ex-Democratic Unionists from the border states and current Democrats mistrusted ex-Whigs and current Republicans, and eventually the convention narrowed to a set of Democrats and Democratically-leaning Unionists. Moreover, extreme Democrats (Copperheads from the North, and ex-Confederate officials from the South) actively participated, thus negating Johnson's former goal of a centrist-only Union party. In short, the partisan realignment Johnson

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<sup>18</sup> Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 547.

hoped to create did not materialize.<sup>19</sup> So the choice for voters in 1866 would once again come down to Democrats vs. Republicans.

Two other events helped frame the contest for voters.<sup>20</sup> First, Johnson took actions to greatly reduce his popularity. He fired more than 1,600 Republican postmasters in the North, for example, and replaced them with men loyal to him. More troubling, however, was his behavior in the run-up to the election. Johnson actively campaigned against Republican congressional candidates in a ten-city, three-week tour known as the “swing around the circle.”<sup>21</sup> On multiple occasions during this swing, Johnson made embarrassing verbal gaffes that were reported widely in the press, which demeaned him and the presidency in the eyes of the Northern public. Second, events in the South made it clear that the region was unrepentant and institutionally unable (or unwilling) to protect the rights of the Freedmen. Racial violence broke out in two cities of the old Confederacy – Memphis in May and New Orleans in July – which left dozens of blacks dead, many more injured, and countless homes, churches, schools, and businesses destroyed; more troubling, local law enforcement appeared to participate in the white-mob behavior. This race-based violence seemed to suggest that the “old white South” was being allowed to “win the peace” by Johnson and his Democratic supporters.

This, then, was the setting as voters throughout the North went to the polls – Johnson had effectively become aligned with the Democratic Party; his popularity had taken a nose-dive thanks to his own words and actions; and Republicans were able to point to events in the South, claim that Reconstruction was far from over, and tie support for Democrats to support for rebellion and lawlessness. And this setting produced a huge electoral win for the Republicans in

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<sup>19</sup> These events are best told by Cox and Cox, *Politics, Principle, and Prejudice*. See also Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle*, 191-96.

<sup>20</sup> See Foner, *Reconstruction*, 261-66.

<sup>21</sup> The tour included Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, Indianapolis, Louisville, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh.

the Fall. The GOP swept 19 of 21 states (the exceptions being Delaware and Maryland), and picked up a net of eight House seats.<sup>22</sup> This provided the Republicans with even stronger veto-proof majorities, and thus guaranteed that they would be able to continue to control the direction of Reconstruction.

### The Reconstruction Acts and Black Suffrage

The Republicans sought to take advantage of their electoral momentum before the 39th Congress even adjourned, and actively pushed Southern Reconstruction into a new phase. Disagreements continued to exist within the party, however, as Radicals and moderates envisioned different paths to success. Radicals still preferred a revolutionary set of policies – such as broad confiscation and redistribution of Confederates’ property, permanent removal of Confederates’ voting rights, federal-led biracial education reform, and semi-permanent (or prolonged) military-led rule and oversight of the rebellious states – while moderates were pragmatic and thought more in terms of what would appeal to constituents in the North.

Both groups agreed on some general things, however – principally that the Democratic governments in the South that had organized under Johnson’ purview (and had failed to recognize the 14th Amendment) needed to be removed and replaced with Freedmen-friendly governments. As such, moderates had come around to an idea pushed in recent years by the Radicals – black suffrage. And this signaled a profound shift in how they viewed the South in the post-war Union. Less than a year earlier, moderate Republicans focused on limiting Democratic representation (the second section of the 14th Amendment) in the event that Southerners proved unwilling to protect the rights of the Freedmen. Now, buoyed by the

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<sup>22</sup> Election results and partisan information are taken from Michael J. Dubin, *United States Congressional Elections, 1788-1997* (Boston: McFarland, 1998) and Kenneth C. Martis, *The Historical Atlas of Political Parties in the United States Congress, 1789-1989* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1989).

northern electorate's rejection of Johnson and the Democrats, they saw an opportunity for *Republican* representation in the South. As Donald, Baker, and Holt state: "In 1867, for the first time, [moderate Republicans] decided to build up a southern wing of the Republican party based on freedmen, anti-Confederate white loyalists, and any ex-Confederates who could be persuaded to cooperate with them."<sup>23</sup>

Moderates would join with Radicals to design a structure that would produce black-friendly (and Republican) governments in the South.<sup>24</sup> This would be embodied in a set of four Military Reconstruction Acts (the first of which was adopted over Johnson's veto at the end of the lame-duck session),<sup>25</sup> which judged the current governments in the ten ex-Confederate states to be "provisional" (and thus temporary); called for constitutional conventions to form new governments; enfranchised blacks in convention-delegate elections and set up procedures for new voter registration; maintained candidacy restrictions for whites per the stipulations of the 14th Amendment and imposed accompanying voting restrictions in convention-delegate elections; and required new constitutions to guarantee black suffrage in all state and federal elections.<sup>26</sup> Upon ratification of its new constitution (following the stipulations above) by a majority of voters, a state could begin the process of rejoining the Union – which would require ratifying the 14th Amendment – and regaining representation in the U.S. Congress.

The military would play a vital role in overseeing the various steps outlined in the Reconstructions Acts. To create a context for the establishment of new Southern governments, the ten ex-Confederate states would be divided into five military zones. Five military

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<sup>23</sup> Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 563.

<sup>24</sup> See Richard H. Abbott, *The Republican Party and the South, 1855-1877* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), Chapter 4; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 271-80.

<sup>25</sup> The remaining three Reconstruction Acts would be adopted during the 40th Congress, which convened in March 1867, immediately after the 39th Congress adjourned. The second and third were also vetoed by Johnson and overridden by Congress. The fourth became law without Johnson's signature.

<sup>26</sup> The Reconstructions Acts would not be applied to Tennessee, as its voters had ratified the 14th Amendment in 1866.

commanders and a smattering of Union troops would then oversee the electoral machinery in the various states – registering voters, calling conventions, scheduling delegate elections, and securing an orderly and peaceful governmental transition. The goal would be to establish new Southern governments that would allow the states to rejoin the Union before the presidential election of 1868. The moderates believed that sectional reconciliation was necessary to convince Northern voters that the post-war peace had been settled and the Nation was moving forward – otherwise, they felt, the GOP would be punished at the polls. As such, one additional provision of the Reconstruction Acts was that Union troops would be removed from a state once its legislature ratified the 14th Amendment. The Radicals were strongly opposed to this provision, and felt that a much lengthier troop presence was needed to protect the new state governments (in the face of presumed rear-guard actions by intransigent whites), but lacked majority support in the caucus – so they held their nose and supported the Acts as the best policies that could be achieved.

By the early months of 1867, therefore, the Republicans in Congress had set the stage for a Republican South to emerge. The Congress could only do so much, however. That is, by enfranchising blacks, disenfranchising many whites, and directing the military to ensure that voter registration and subsequent elections operated smoothly (and without disruption) throughout the ex-Confederacy, the Reconstruction Acts placed the onus squarely *on the states* to make a Republican South happen. It was now up to the Southern state voters and convention delegates to do their part.

### **Initial Republican Successes**

The first hurdle for the development of a Republican South would occur with the state-level constitutional conventions in 1867-1868. Should these conventions trend in the correct

direction, succeeding decisions – the election of state governments and the ratification of the 14th Amendment – would represent the next hurdle. The Republican Congress had stacked the deck for successful party development in the South, but state political actors would need to stay on script and perform the heavy lifting.

### State Constitutional Conventions

Per the guidelines of the Reconstruction Acts, the Southern states would decide first whether to hold a constitutional convention, and if decided in the affirmative, to elect delegates to it. In keeping with the suffrage extension to the Freedmen, a movement was initiated to quickly register black voters in the South. At the forefront of these efforts were the Army, the Freedmen's Bureau, and the patriot-club Union Leagues; however, blacks themselves were proactive and sought to secure their place in the nation. In the end, black registration was significant, and black turnout in the convention elections was high – roughly 80 percent of registered black voters went to the polls, and their support was crucial to the conventions being approved.<sup>27</sup> Many whites did not vote – with many conservatives abstaining in protest – and the percentage of those that both voted *and* supported the conventions was small. This raised some red flags.<sup>28</sup> Northern Republicans were concerned that for a Southern wing to be viable, it needed to be comprised of more than just the region's newly enfranchised blacks. However, the initial electoral efforts of the ex-Whig planters and businessmen, along with other anti-secessionist Southern Unionists from the hill-country, left a lot to be desired in that regard.

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<sup>27</sup> Abbott, *The Republican Party and the South*, 137.

<sup>28</sup> Martin E. Mantell, *Johnson, Grant, and the Politics of Reconstruction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 47-49; Abbot, *The Republican Party and the South*, 137-38.

Nonetheless, the high black turnout bore fruit, as conventions in all ten states were approved.<sup>29</sup> These conventions convened at various times in late-1867 through early-1868 (see Table 1).<sup>30</sup> And while white mass participation in the convention elections was modest, white elite success was another story.<sup>31</sup> As Table 2a indicates, whites constituted a majority (72.5 percent) of the convention delegates, with white Southerners controlling the lion's share (77.8 percent) of those seats. Only in South Carolina did black delegates outnumber white delegates.

Overall, Republicans dominated the convention proceedings, which is illustrated through an examination of the state delegations. Indeed, as Table 2b suggests, Radicals – those with a high “Republican Support Score” (RSS), based on their convention voting – represented a majority (58.7 percent) of convention delegates,<sup>32</sup> and a Radical contingent controlled every state delegation except one (Texas).<sup>33</sup> A closer look at the composition of those Radical delegates, which is illustrated in Table 2c, indicates that Southern white Republicans (or “scalawags”) were the plurality coalition (40 percent). Outside whites (or “carpetbaggers”) comprised a quarter (24.9 percent) of the Radical delegates, while blacks represented just over a third (34.2 percent).

Scalawags were not a heterogeneous group, but most were former Whigs – planters and business leaders – who had been part of the antebellum social and economic elite.<sup>34</sup> They saw Reconstruction, and the decline of the Democratic Party, as an opportunity to regain political

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<sup>29</sup> The best coverage, by far, of the politics of the Southern constitutional conventions (or “black and tan” conventions, as they were commonly called) is Richard L. Hume and Jerry B. Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags: The Constitutional Conventions of Radical Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008). But see, also, Foner, *Reconstruction*, 316-33; Abbott, *The Republican Party and the South*, 139-49.

<sup>30</sup> The exception was Texas, which did not convene until June 1868.

<sup>31</sup> All data and statistics related to the conventions and convention delegates in this subsection come from Hume and Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags*.

<sup>32</sup> The Republican Support Score (RSS) “reflects the percentage of votes each delegate cast with Republicans on a series of votes in each issue category.” The issue categories were: (1) economics, (2) government structure, (3) racial issues, (4) suffrage, and (5) miscellaneous. From these issue-based scores, an overall RSS was computed. See Hume and Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags*, 277-281.

<sup>33</sup> Florida and South Carolina are excluded, as support scores could not be calculated for these delegations.

<sup>34</sup> A useful summary of the backgrounds, beliefs, and policy positions of the scalawags and carpetbaggers is found in Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 582-85.

power. They also hoped that that Republican-controlled government, working within a new, competitive two-party system, would promote economic expansion and hasten the rebuilding of the war-ravaged Southern infrastructure. Finally, while scalawags understood the necessity of working with blacks in the party, they often held racist views and blanched at notions of creating institutions that would promote blacks' social equality. Carpetbaggers were ex-Northern transplants – mostly farmers, businessmen, middle-class professionals (principally lawyers), or ex-military – who sought a fresh start in the South. Often their views dovetailed with the moral aspirations of Reconstruction (and thus their views toward blacks were quite different from those of the scalawags); pragmatically, many also sought new careers in the South for economic reasons and were willing to make large up-front capital investments (such as those who attempted to enter the former-plantation economy) to seek their fortunes.

Black convention delegates were also a heterogeneous group. Most (52.5 percent) were, in fact, of mixed race. Most had been slaves at one time – but a sizable proportion (41.8 percent) was freeborn. The vast majority (88.4 percent) was literate. They were appreciably poorer than either Southern or outside whites (with property holdings around 20 percent of what white delegates combined possessed). Finally, their employment background was different, with a majority (almost 56 percent) of black delegates working as ministers or laborers – occupations that only a small percentage of white delegates held. As a group, however, they recognized the path for future black success in the South, and voted unabashedly for Republican policies (87 percent could be classified as Radicals).

Northern Republican leaders – ever mindful of the need to attract Southern white supporters – actively worked to steer the conventions away from adopting extreme (punitive)

policies that would divide the races and hamper the party's viability and growth.<sup>35</sup> In this endeavor, they were mostly successful – thanks, in part, to white delegates controlling all key convention committees. Most importantly, no constitutions made allowances for confiscation and redistribution of (ex-Confederate) property. All constitutions, by contrast, provided for universal manhood suffrage, equal protection under the law, and public education. Radical initiatives, like integrated public schools, were mostly defeated. Moderate pleas to avoid disenfranchisement were only partially heeded, however, as voting and office-holding restrictions against former Confederates were adopted in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Virginia. Those limitations aside, all constitutions adopted moderate-approved economic initiatives, as tax reforms and economic development provisions were included.

The new state constitutions having been written, Southern voters would now go to the polls to approve them (or not), while also electing state and federal officials.

### 1868 Elections and Subsequent Politics

The Republicans were largely successful in their efforts to have new Southern state constitutions adopted, Republican state governments elected, and conditions for returning to the Union (ratification of the 14th Amendment) satisfied. By the end of June 1868, seven of the 10 Reconstructed states – Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia – had adopted new constitutions, elected unified Republican governments (except Georgia),<sup>36</sup> and would be readmitted to the Union.<sup>37</sup> And by the end of July, all seven would have representation once again in Congress, which would result in 28 House seats and 12 Senate

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<sup>35</sup> For examples of such efforts, see Abbott, *The Republican Party and the South*, 139-49.

<sup>36</sup> Partisan control of the Georgia House was disputed; the best account identified 88 Democrats, 84 Republicans, and three of unknown partisanship.

<sup>37</sup> The seven states would be readmitted in two separate acts in June (one act for Arkansas specifically, and one omnibus act for the other six states).

seats being added to the Republican column against only 4 Democratic/Conservative House seats.<sup>38</sup> (See Tables 3-8 for individual state results in these and subsequent years.) And, finally, all seven would participate in the 1868 presidential election in November.

These GOP successes were tempered by some more troubling elements. For example, the building of a broad bi-racial electoral coalition saw limited success. Per the advice of Northern leaders, state GOP organizations throughout the South nominated whites (scalawags and carpetbaggers) predominantly for state office, as a way to limit conservative attempts to use race (and white supremacy) as a wedge issue to split the burgeoning biracial Republican coalition. Despite these efforts, white support for Republican tickets and the newly drafted constitutions was tepid, and Republican victories and constitutional ratifications were achieved mostly because of strong black turnout (and continued, temporary disenfranchisement of some whites).<sup>39</sup>

More concerning, though, were constitutional ratification defeats in Mississippi and Virginia, the first by state referendum and the second by a scheduling failure.<sup>40</sup> In each case, continued policies of white disenfranchisement emboldened opposition and forestalled ratification success. These failures led Congress, early in 1869, to adopt a work-around, which called for separate votes on the constitutions and the disenfranchisement provisions – this led to both Virginia and Mississippi ratifying their constitutions (along with both the 14th and 15th Amendments) but voting down disenfranchisement. As a result, Virginia and Mississippi were

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<sup>38</sup> Georgia would only have members seated in the House; one of its House seats and both of its two Senate seats remained vacant through the remainder of the 40th Congress.

<sup>39</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 332.

<sup>40</sup> See Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 707-08 note 26. Alabama had also initially rejected their constitution, which led to the Republicans changing the ratification requirements via a new (Fourth) Reconstruction Act. See Abbot, *The Republican Party and the South*, 162.

restored to the Union in January and February 1870, respectively.<sup>41</sup> Texas, which had been much slower to convene and conclude a constitutional convention, would follow a month later.

More generally, the Democrats showed some electoral recovery as early as spring 1868, principally in Louisiana and Georgia (where Republican electoral success was weaker than everywhere else in the South). Republicans controlled both state houses in Louisiana, but by narrower margins than elsewhere, and could only muster majority control of the Georgia Senate. Moreover, three of the four U.S House seats from the South that the GOP failed to capture were from these states. This Democratic recovery became more pronounced in the November presidential election; while Republican Ulysses S. Grant carried Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina, both Georgia and Louisiana cast their electoral votes for Horatio Seymour (NY), the Democratic nominee.

The Democratic victories in Georgia and Louisiana were in part the result of increased white turnout – as conservative whites voted at much higher rates throughout the South, relative to the constitutional and state legislative elections earlier in the Spring – but also the use of violence, threats, and intimidation of potential black voters by terrorist organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, a secret society of former Confederates and fellow travellers who were intent on restoring white supremacy and rule.<sup>42</sup> Klan activities reduced black turnout considerably, which drew the attention and concern of national Republican leaders. In addition, political activities in Georgia – where two months before the presidential election some white Republican state legislators joined with Democratic state legislators to oust 25 black members of the state house

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<sup>41</sup> See William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger: Republican Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 115-27; Jack P. Madden, Jr., “Virginia: The Persistence of Centrist Hegemony,” in Otto H. Olsen, ed., *Reconstruction and Redemption in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 113-55.

<sup>42</sup> On the use of violence in Southern elections, along with the rise of the Klan, see Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 3-188; George C. Rable, *But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 74-79.

and 3 black members of the state senate on the grounds that the new Georgia constitution did not provide blacks with the right to hold office – grew so dire that Congress in December 1869 denied the state further representation and returned it to military rule. Georgia would rejoin the Union in July 1870, after the black legislators were reinstated and all the white legislators with Confederate backgrounds were removed.<sup>43</sup>

### **The Collapse of Reconstruction**

The difficulties in Louisiana and Georgia were extreme cases of a more general pattern throughout the South. As historian William Gillette notes: “Although the election of 1868 was a Republican victory, it revealed undercurrents of white conservatism and indications of black vulnerability that could endanger Republicanism. It was to be expected that Democratic voters would succumb to the pandering to white prejudice; but the number of reports indicating the disenchantment of white Republican voters with the course of reconstruction was ominous.”<sup>44</sup>

Republican strategy, in response, took two forms. First, the national party sought to shore up black support by adopting a constitutional amendment that would guarantee and extend black suffrage rights. Similar to their argument regarding the 14th Amendment, Republican leaders contended that an amendment would protect black voting rights for all time, and not leave them vulnerable to any temporary majorities that might seek to eliminate them with a simple statute. Moreover, an amendment would extend black voting rights *outside* of the South, into Northern areas that had been resistant to the granting of such rights. Republican leaders believed that additional black votes would help preserve the narrow Northern victories the party

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<sup>43</sup> See Alan Conway, *The Reconstruction of Georgia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967), 162-81.

<sup>44</sup> Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction*, 16-17.

enjoyed in 1868, while perhaps opening up portions of the Border states (where the GOP was competitive but ultimately unsuccessful) for electoral success.<sup>45</sup>

The legislation that would become the 15th Amendment, which stipulated that “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude” and provided Congress with power to enforce the right, passed in late-February 1869, during the lame-duck session of the 40th Congress, and was ratified just under a year later. Amid more Klan violence in 1870, which led to Republican electoral losses in Alabama and North Carolina, Congress subsequently passed a series of Enforcement Acts in 1870-71 – empowering the federal judiciary and the president – to protect the sanctity of voting and black rights more generally.<sup>46</sup>

Second, Republican leaders sought to reach out, yet again, to ex-Whigs in order to increase the party’s white support. This would be accomplished by down playing explicitly black interests – while trumpeting the symbolic benefit of the 15th Amendment – and convincing would-be black politicians to step aside for the good of the party. Economic development, especially the promotion of railroads, would be emphasized instead, in an attempt to shift the basis of politicking away from race. Democratic leaders would also, for a time, shelve distinctly racial appeals, in the hopes of eliminating their party’s negative image (as an unrepentant, violent group of white supremacists), which they believed enabled Republican unity.<sup>47</sup>

Thus, a more normal period of two-party politics took hold between 1871-73 – helped along by the U.S. army’s defeat of the Klan, following the passage of the final Enforcement Act

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<sup>45</sup> William Gillette, *The Right to Vote: Politics and the Passage of the Fifteenth Amendment* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965).

<sup>46</sup> See Foner, *Reconstruction*, 454-59. The best legislative history of the various Enforcement Acts is Xi Wang, *The Trial of Democracy: Black Suffrage and Northern Republicans, 1860-1910* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 49-92.

<sup>47</sup> On the move away from racial appeals by both parties, and the courting of white ex-Whigs, see Michael Perman, *The Road to Redemption: Southern Politics, 1869-1879* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

in April 1871. White (Democratic) turnout declined, as distinctly racial appeals (which had been used to mobilize many whites) dried up, while Democratic leaders realigned their party's image and message. Republicans did not control the entire South, as they never gained a majority foothold in Virginia and (by that time) had lost Tennessee and Georgia – but they remained either competitive or solidly in control everywhere else.

The end of this non-racial period came in late-1872 and 1873, as the Republicans' economic strategy collapsed. Specifically, the railroad development that was at the heart of their plan failed – as corruption and over-chartering of lines led to widespread defaults. This left (mostly) Republican state governments holding the bag, as they directly subsidized the development with direct loans of bond issues. To meet the interest obligations on the bonds – now that the railroads were bankrupt – states had to raise taxes.

Thus, as railroad bankruptcies spread across the country and banking collapses followed, a true economic panic took hold in 1873, which fed into a broader economic depression that persisted for the remainder of the decade (and beyond in some parts of the country). In the South, the Republicans, thanks to their economic agenda, were seen as the cause of this calamity. As a result, the balance of power within the Southern Republican establishment shifted, and the party did a quick about face – eschewing its Whiggish economic strategy for a more pragmatic one. Specifically, Republican leaders re-focused on maintaining and mobilizing the party's base – black voters – amid the growing economic turmoil. In addition to pushing state-level civil rights reforms,<sup>48</sup> Republican leaders also began actively recruiting blacks for public offices. In very

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<sup>48</sup> National GOP leaders would also attempt to do their part, by adopting a new civil rights law (the Civil Rights Act of 1875).

short order, the Scalawag-led Republican Party of the early-1870s gave way to the Carpetbagger-Black-led Republican Party of the mid-1870s.<sup>49</sup>

The Republicans' turn toward the protection and promotion of blacks' rights also led the Democrats to alter their strategy, as they once again sold themselves as the party of white supremacy. With Southern elections becoming primarily about race, both parties focused on voter turnout. Republicans continued to receive blacks' votes but began losing the support of scalawags, who were increasingly pressured – with threats of both violence and social ostracism – by white Democrats. In addition, Democrats were successful in re-mobilizing whites who had disengaged in the early-1870s (when the parties grappled over economic policy). Finally, various paramilitary groups like the Red Shirts and the White League, acting on behalf of the Democratic Party, used violence and terror to depress black turnout in strategic parts of the South.<sup>50</sup> Such organized violence was possible because President Grant – who had used the army and the Justice Department to crush the Klan in the early 1870s – had become less willing to intercede in such a fashion toward the middle of the decade. This was because the Northern public's view of Republican policies – amid the nation's financial difficulties and reports of widespread corruption within the Grant administration – had soured, especially those policies like Reconstruction that were not directed at addressing *their* most pressing concerns. Grant worried that further military intervention in the South would result in voters punishing Republican politicians in the North.<sup>51</sup>

As a result, Republican governments in the South began to fall. By 1874, the GOP maintained full control only of Mississippi and South Carolina and partial control only of Florida,

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<sup>49</sup> Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 599-602.

<sup>50</sup> The Red Shirts were active in Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina, while the White League operated in Louisiana.

<sup>51</sup> See Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction*.

Louisiana, and North Carolina – the Southern states with the largest black populations. The Republicans would lose their majorities in the Mississippi legislature a year later, amid an electoral environment fraught with intimidation and violence – and Republican governor Adelbert Ames would resign from office shortly thereafter, in advance of being impeached.<sup>52</sup> The GOP maintained an institutional foothold in the remaining four states until the elections of 1876, and three of them (Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina) served as critical components in both a positive Republican outcome in the presidential election and a compromise to end Reconstruction.

The presidential election of 1876 pitted two reform-minded governors – Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio and Samuel Tilden of New York – against one another, and electoral momentum seemed to be running in the Democrats’ favor. Thus, they ambitiously set their sites on capturing the White House and perhaps wresting full control of the federal government from the GOP.<sup>53</sup> And when all votes were cast, the result appeared to favor Tilden. But the electoral votes of three yet-to-be-redeemed Southern states (Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina) were called into question,<sup>54</sup> with ballot fraud at the heart of the dispute, and the winner of these states would determine the election. And the Republicans still controlled the state canvassing board in all three states. Moreover, rival slates of state partisan candidates claimed victory in Louisiana and South Carolina, but national Republican leaders were well past the point of using the military to prop up Republican governments – viewed, by this time, as illegitimate by nearly all local whites – in the South. Still, as Donald, Baker, and Holt state: “if northern Republicans

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<sup>52</sup> The systematic use of intimidation and violence by the Red Shirts (and other paramilitary groups) to retake the elections for the Democrats became known as the “Mississippi Plan.” See Warren A. Ellem, “The Overthrow of Reconstruction in Mississippi,” *Journal of Mississippi History* 54 (1992) 175-201; Nicholas Lemann, *Redemption: the Last Battle of Reconstruction* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

<sup>53</sup> See Keith Ian Polakoff, *The Politics of Inertia: The Election of 1876 and the End of Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); Michael F. Holt, *By One Vote: The Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

<sup>54</sup> One electoral vote in Oregon was contested as well.

were prepared to allow the Democrats to resume control of state governments in Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina in 1877, they were not ready to do so until the electoral votes in each had been cast in December and sent to Washington.”<sup>55</sup>

In time, the GOP-controlled canvassing boards threw out a sufficient number of Democratic votes (based on fraudulent ballot design) to award the electoral votes of Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina to Hayes. With these electoral votes in hand, Hayes had a one-vote majority. Democrats cried foul, and rival political actors in the three Southern states moved to certify results that would award the disputed electoral votes to Tilden. To settle the crisis, Congress set up a 15-member Electoral Commission to investigate and render a decision – with the eventual outcome favoring Hayes on an 8-7 vote.

Underlying the dispute-settlement process was a range of backdoor politicking, which culminated in the (presumed) Compromise of 1877.<sup>56</sup> The negotiations underlying the compromise were secret, but ultimately the Democrats agreed to give up their leverage – for example, the Democratically-controlled House needed to validate the Electoral Commission’s decision, and the minority Democrats in the Senate could have pursued a filibuster – and acquiesce to Hayes’s election, in exchange for assurances from the Republicans that (among other things) they would no longer use the army to prop up GOP governments in the three remaining un-redeemed states – and instead allow “home rule” to operate.<sup>57</sup> Subsequent behavior by Grant (who withdrew the army in Florida in January 1877, when a new Democratic

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<sup>55</sup> Donald, Baker, and Holt, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 633.

<sup>56</sup> The standard account of the Compromise of 1877 is C. Vann Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951). Whether the Hayes camp and Southern Democrats settled on a true quid pro quo arrangement (such that it could be considered a “compromise”) is discussed in Polakoff, *The Politics of Inertia*; Allen Peskin, “Was There a Compromise of 1877?” *Journal of American History* 60 (1973): 63-75; C. Vann Woodward, “Yes, There Was a Compromise of 1877.” *Journal of American History* 60 (1973): 215-23; Michael Les Benedict, “Southern Democrats in the Crisis of 1876-1877: A Reconsideration of *Reunion and Reaction*,” *Journal of Southern History* 64 (1980): 489-524.

<sup>57</sup> Both Grant and Hayes also demanded that blacks’ rights be respected in the new Democratically controlled governments, and received assurances of compliance.

governor took office) and Hayes (who, once inaugurated, refused to support the entrenched but under-fire Republican governors in Louisiana and South Carolina, and directed the army guarding the statehouses back to their barracks – thus nudging the Republican governors into giving up their office claims and stepping aside) was consistent with GOP leaders keeping up their end of the deal.

Thus, by late April 1877, the entire ex-Confederate South was “redeemed” by Southern Democrats, and the Republicans’ ambitious policy of Reconstruction came to an end. The collapse had not occurred all at once, as some states returned to white Democratic home rule as early as 1869 (Tennessee) while others (Louisiana and South Carolina) held out for considerably longer. Yet, the end result was the same, and the dream of creating a Republican South – which began so promisingly in 1867 – was dealt a near-fatal blow. National Republicans would continue to hold out (some) hope for a viable Southern wing for the better part of the next two decades – a point we will return to in our conclusion – but little would be achieved to make that a reality.

### **Assessing Black Gains during Reconstruction**

Apart from tracking the demise of the Republican Party in the South during the course of the 1870s, culminating with the failure of Reconstruction as a congressional program, a separate pursuit would be to assess the gains that Southern blacks made during these years. At the individual level, due process, equal protection of the laws, and voting rights (guaranteed by the 14th and 15th Amendments) were major steps forward, and provided blacks with important civil and political rights. Over time, of course, these rights were eroded through extra-legal means

(i.e., violence, intimidation, fraud, and social pressure).<sup>58</sup> And rights of social equality – in transportation and accommodations – never really came to fruition, despite the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1875 (due to lack of enforcement provisions and overall GOP weakness by that time).

At the elite level, black success was quite tangible. Despite the national Republican strategy of limiting black office holding – in order (per their argument) to attract enough Southern whites to build a true and lasting bi-racial coalition in the South – blacks sought and achieved political office from the beginning of Reconstruction. Black participation in the state constitutional conventions has already been covered. Once the Southern states adopted new constitutions and began the process of electing new governments (and being readmitted to the Union and regaining representation in Congress), blacks claimed a sizeable number of state legislative seats immediately. This is illustrated in Tables 10 and 11. Black office holding was especially strong in the state houses, where blacks tallied a significant number of seats beginning in 1868 – and constituted a third of the entire chamber in Florida and Louisiana and a majority in South Carolina. By the early 1870s, the Mississippi state house also emerged as a locale for strong black participation, with blacks comprising a chamber majority after the 1873 elections. Black speakers of the house would also be elected in both South Carolina and Mississippi.<sup>59</sup>

Overall, more than 630 blacks would be elected as state legislators in the ten former-Confederate during Reconstruction.<sup>60</sup> The high-water mark for several states, in terms of raw numbers, was 1873-1874, coinciding with the Republican Party's desperate push to maintain a

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<sup>58</sup> It is important to remember, though, that the voting rights provided by the 15th Amendment were national in scope, and these rights were enjoyed by Northern blacks even as extra-legal means were infringing upon those of Southern blacks.

<sup>59</sup> These individuals would be Samuel J. Lee (1872-74) and Robert B. Elliott (1874-76) in South Carolina, and John R. Lynch (1872-73) and I.D. Shadd (1874-76) in Mississippi. See Foner, *Reconstruction*, 354 *fn.* 15.

<sup>60</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 354-55 note 15.

strong foothold in the South by actively courting blacks for office. Beyond the state legislature, blacks were elected to prominent state-level positions, including Lieutenant Governor (Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina), Treasurer (Louisiana and South Carolina), Superintendent of Education (Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Secretary of State (Florida, Mississippi, and South Carolina),<sup>61</sup> along with a range of lower offices like mayor, alderman, justice of the peace, county commissioner, and sheriff.<sup>62</sup> In addition, blacks were elected to the highest legislative positions at the federal level; as Table 11 indicates, fourteen blacks held House seats and two held Senate seats during Reconstruction. More than half of them (9 of 16) had once been slaves, indicating the aspirational possibilities that emerged for blacks during a very short span of time.

Even as the Democratic consolidation of the South took hold, black political rights – and black office holding – were not eliminated immediately. The white Redeemer governments tread lightly, not wanting to risk further federal government intervention (especially with a Republican in the White House). Their initial strategy to retain power was to use state registration and canvassing boards, along with the redrawing of legislative district boundaries, to keep black voting power in check. Thus, blacks continued to vote in large numbers in the South through the latter part of the 19th Century, and some blacks continued to be elected to office. Indeed, six blacks served in the U.S. House between the end of Reconstruction and the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>63</sup> That said, these political “successes” were carefully calibrated and watched by Democratic leaders. Moreover, black civil rights suffered greatly with the onset of Redemption,

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<sup>61</sup> P.B.S. Pinchback would also hold the governorship in Louisiana for a short time (between December 1872 and January 1873), having been elevated to the office due to the suspension of the sitting governor (Henry C. Warmoth).

<sup>62</sup> Foner, *Reconstruction*, 352-56.

<sup>63</sup> James E. O’Hara, North Carolina (48th and 49th Congresses); Henry P. Cheatham, North Carolina (51st and 52nd Congresses); John Mercer Langston, Virginia (51st Congress); Thomas E. Miller, South Carolina (51st Congress); George W. Murray, South Carolina (53rd and 54th Congresses); and George Henry White, North Carolina (54th and 55th Congresses).

as white Democratic sheriffs, judges, and other authorities typically ignored black concerns involving due process and equal protection of the laws.

### **Conclusion**

Our goal in this paper has been to trace the development of the Republican Party in the South in the years after the Civil War, during the period known as Reconstruction. As national Republican leaders debated the best way to integrate the ex-Confederate states back into the Union, the issue of creating a Southern wing of the GOP evolved considerably. During the Civil War and early post-war years, a Southern GOP was little more than a Radical pipe dream, based on the enfranchisement of blacks – an idea that was too extreme for its time. In somewhat short order, moderate Republicans came around to the idea – after the GOP’s successful battle with President Johnson and the positive results from the congressional elections of 1866 – and building a Republican South became a legitimate party strategy by 1867.

Southern Republicanism started well, but never fully took hold anywhere in the former Confederate states. The GOP was never able to establish a strong and consistent following among white Southerners – try as party leaders might to reach out to ex-Whigs – something that was critical to build a lasting party organization. Early successes were due mostly to strong black turnout and temporary disenfranchisement of some white Southerners. Over time, and at different rates in different states, Republican control of state governments melted away, often amid electoral environments fraught with violence and intimidation. In the end, Republican politicians were reliant almost exclusively on black votes, and the GOP held on the longest in those states (Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina) where black voting power was the strongest.

Even as national Republican leaders came to believe that Reconstruction was a failure, many still held out hope that a Southern wing of the GOP could be maintained (or recreated). Hayes, for example, continued to hold – like many before him – that the white South could be divided on economic grounds, and that ex-Whigs could be courted to join the Republican Party. Hayes used patronage appointments and the promise of economic aid as olive branches – and while Democrats were happy to take what was offered, none (even those with ex-Whig backgrounds) were interested in joining a party that was anathema in the South. Subsequent Republican presidents (James Garfield and Chester A. Arthur) sought to take advantage of intra-Democratic schisms in the South – as populist-based groups broke with the planter-controlled Democratic leadership – and achieved some success, as “fusionist” Republican-Independent coalitions were elected in Tennessee and Virginia. Nonetheless, these victories were fleeting, and only when the Republicans managed to regain control of both chambers of Congress and the presidency in 1888 did a realistic hope for a Republican South reemerge.<sup>64</sup>

That hope fell through during the 51st Congress (1889-91), when the Republicans tried but were ultimately unable to push through a new Enforcement Act that might have breathed new life into a near-dead Southern wing. Democrats quickly regrouped – after surviving the GOP’s “near miss” – and sought to remedy any future problems of federal intervention or state-based fusionist coalitions by adopting state-level disenfranchisement provisions (via statutes, constitutional amendments, or the writing of entirely new constitutions). Such provisions – which included literacy tests, residency requirements, and poll taxes – were meant to make both

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<sup>64</sup> On these Republican efforts by Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and others see Vincent De Santis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question: The New Departure Years, 1877–1897* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959); Stanley Hirshson, *Farewell to the Bloody Shirt: Northern Republicans and the Southern Negro, 1877–1893* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962); Wang, *The Trial of Democracy*; Charles W. Calhoun, *Conceiving a New Republic: The Republican Party and the Southern Question, 1869–1900* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006).

voter registration and voting itself more difficult for blacks (and often poor whites).<sup>65</sup> Between 1888 and 1908, every Southern state adopted some combination of these disenfranchisement provisions, which effectively eliminated black voting rights and destroyed the Southern Republican Party as a viable electoral entity for more than half a century.<sup>66</sup> To some, these cases of legal disenfranchisement represented the true end of the Republicans' Reconstruction experiment.

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<sup>65</sup> In addition, "grandfather clauses" were created, which enabled poor whites who could not pass a literacy test to remain eligible to vote. More generally, such clauses provided voting rights to those whose grandfathers could vote prior to January 1, 1867; this worked to the advantage of poor whites relative to blacks (as most of their grandfathers were slaves).

<sup>66</sup> J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Rise of the One-Party South, 1880-1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); Michael Perman, *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

**Table 1: Dates of Southern Constitutional Conventions**

State	Dates of Convention	Days in Session
Alabama	November 5, 1867 - December 6, 1867	28
Louisiana	November 23, 1867 - March 9, 1868	81
Virginia	December 3, 1867 - April 17, 1868	103
Georgia	December 9, 1867 - March 11, 1868	67
Arkansas	January 7, 1868 - February 14, 1868	31
Mississippi	January 7, 1868 - May 18, 1868	114
North Carolina	January 14, 1868 - March 16, 1868	54
South Carolina	January 14, 1868 - March 17, 1868	53
Florida	January 20, 1868 - February 25, 1868	30
Texas	June 1, 1868 - February 6, 1869	127

Source: Richard L. Hume and Jerry B. Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags: The Constitutional Conventions of Radical Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 3.

**Table 2: Demographics of Southern Constitutional Conventions****(A) Delegate Groups**

Convention	Southern Whites	Blacks	Outside Whites	Unclassified Whites	Total
Alabama	56	17	24	2	99
Arkansas	48	8	17	0	73
Florida	17	19	13	1	50
Georgia	114	37	12	1	164
Louisiana	31	50	14	2	97
Mississippi	54	17	21	4	96
North Carolina	90	14	18	0	122
South Carolina	34	72	15	0	121
Texas	70	10	10	2	92
Virginia	60	24	20	0	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1018</b>

**(B) Radical, Swing, and Conservative Delegates**

Convention	Radicals	Swing Voters	Conservatives	Total
Alabama	58	20	18	96
Arkansas	47	8	12	67
Georgia	66	28	48	142
Louisiana	55	19	14	88
Mississippi	47	12	19	78
North Carolina	90	15	11	116
Texas	24	23	36	83
Virginia	63	1	32	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>766</b>

**(C) Radical Delegates**

Convention	Southern Whites	Blacks	Outside Whites	Unclassified Whites	Total
Alabama	22	16	18	2	58
Arkansas	22	8	17	0	47
Georgia	22	35	9	0	66
Louisiana	10	36	9	0	55
Mississippi	12	17	16	2	47
North Carolina	59	13	18	0	90
Texas	13	5	6	0	24
Virginia	20	24	19	0	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>450</b>

**Source:** Richard L. Hume and Jerry B. Gough, *Blacks, Carpetbaggers, and Scalawags: The Constitutional Conventions of Radical Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 24, 271 (Tables 2.2, 8.1, and 8.2).

**Table 3: Percentage of Republican Seats in Southern State Houses, 1867-1880**

State/Elect Year	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama <sup>67</sup>	-	97	-	35	-	46	-	40	-	20	-	3	-	1
Arkansas	-	96	-	54	-	63	-	12	-	18	-	3	-	11
Florida <sup>68</sup>	-	71	-	53	-	56	-	46	-	40	-	37	-	24
Georgia	-	.	-	17	-	8	-	4	-	5	-	3	-	6
Louisiana <sup>69</sup>	-	55	-	73	-	.	-	.	-	38	-	15	-	24
Mississippi	-	-	77	-	57	-	59	-	16	-	7	-	4	-
North Carolina	-	68	-	35	-	45	-	28	-	30	-	34	-	31
South Carolina	-	89	-	81	-	81	-	73	-	48	-	2	-	3
Tennessee	100	-	20	16	-	35	-	7	-	21	-	19	-	49
Texas	-	-	60	-	-	18	12	-	-	6	-	10	-	9
Virginia	-	-	30	-	25	-	24	-	20	-	7	-	17	-

Source: Michael J. Dubin, *Party Affiliations in the State Legislatures: A Year by Year Summary, 1796-2006* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2007).

Note: Dashes indicate years in which no elections were held, dots indicate that elections were held but no data on partisan division is available.

<sup>67</sup> Both parties disputed the results of the 1872 election in Alabama. Eventually, Republicans succeeded in placing several of their candidates in seats ‘won’ by Democrats, resulting in a Republican majority in the House of 51 to 49 seats. This puts the ‘real’ Republican percentage for 1873 and 1874 at 51%.

<sup>68</sup> The Florida legislature rejected returns from 9 counties in the 1870 election. According to newspaper results the actual partisan division in the House was 28 Conservatives, 23 Republicans, and 1 Independent for the years 1871 and 1872. This would put the ‘real’ Republican percentage at 44% for this period.

<sup>69</sup> The Louisiana elections of 1872 and 1874 produced two competing results – one in which Democrats controlled both chambers, one in which Republicans did. In this period, Louisiana effectively had two functioning legislatures.

**Table 4: Percentage of Republican Seats in Southern State Senates, 1867-1880**

State/Elect Year	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama <sup>70</sup>	-	97	-	.	-	42	-	39	-	0	-	6	-	0
Arkansas	-	81	-	69	-	80	-	6	-	6	-	3	-	0
Florida <sup>71</sup>	-	67	-	52	-	54	-	50	-	38	-	22	-	16
Georgia	-	59	-	32	-	9	-	2	-	2	-	0	-	2
Louisiana <sup>72</sup>	-	56	-	81	-	.	-	.	-	44	-	28	-	11
Mississippi	-	-	79	-	62	-	62	-	30	-	5	-	3	-
North Carolina	-	76	-	28	-	36	-	22	-	20	-	32	-	24
South Carolina	-	81	-	84	-	76	-	79	-	55	-	15	-	6
Tennessee	100	-	20	12	-	28	-	8	-	20	-	12	-	40
Texas	-	-	63	-	-	43	13	-	-	10	-	13	-	3
Virginia	-	-	30	-	23	-	21	-	14	-	9	-	23	-

Source: Michael J. Dubin, *Party Affiliations in the State Legislatures: A Year by Year Summary, 1796-2006* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2007).

Note: Dashes indicate years in which no elections were held, dots indicate that elections were held but no data on partisan division is available.

<sup>70</sup> There was no election of senators in 1870. Both parties disputed the results of the 1872 election in Alabama. Eventually, Republicans succeeded in placing several of their candidates in seats ‘won’ by Democrats, resulting in a brief Republican majority in the Senate of 17 to 16 seats. This puts the ‘real’ Republican percentage for 1873 and 1874 at 52%. The death of a Republican senator switched majority control back to the Democrats.

<sup>71</sup> The Florida legislature rejected returns from 9 counties in the 1870 election. According to newspaper results the actual partisan division in the House was 28 Conservatives, 23 Republicans, and 1 Independent for the years 1871 and 1872. This would put the ‘real’ Republican percentage at 44% for this period.

<sup>72</sup> The Louisiana elections of 1872 and 1874 produced two competing results – one in which Democrats controlled both chambers, one in which Republicans did. In this period, Louisiana effectively had two functioning legislatures.

**Table 5: Percentage of Republican Vote in Southern Gubernatorial Elections, 1867-1880**

State/Elect Year	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama	-	100	-	49.5	-	52.5	-	46.2	-	35.9	-	0	-	30.7
Arkansas	-	100	-	-	-	51.8	-	0	-	34.4	-	0	-	0
Florida	-	59.1	-	-	-	52.4	-	-	-	49.5	-	-	-	45.1
Georgia	-	52.2	-	-	0	30.5	-	-	-	23.1	-	-	-	0
Louisiana	-	63.1	-	-	-	56.9	-	-	-	47.9	-	-	36.5	-
Mississippi <sup>73</sup>	-	47.4	66.8	-	-	-	57.3	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
North Carolina	-	55.6	-	-	-	50.5	-	-	-	47.2	-	-	-	48.7
South Carolina	-	75.2	-	62.3	-	65.7	-	53.9	-	49.7	-	0	-	0
Tennessee <sup>74</sup>	76.8	-	31.8	34.5	-	46.3	-	35.1	-	5.0	-	27.1	-	42.6
Texas	-	-	50.6	-	-	-	34.4	-	-	24.9	-	10.0	-	24.4
Virginia <sup>75</sup>	-	-	45.8	-	-	-	43.9	-	-	-	0	-	-	-

Source: Michael J. Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1861-1911: The Official Results by State and County* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010).

<sup>73</sup> Democratic candidate Benjamin Humphreys won the 1868 gubernatorial election. However, because the new constitution was rejected at the same time civil government was not restored and Humphreys did not take office.

<sup>74</sup> The 1869 gubernatorial election saw Dewitt W. Senter, a Republican-Conservative candidate, beat William B. Stokes, a Republican-Radical candidate; the percentage listed is the one received by Stokes. The 1880 gubernatorial election was a four way race in which Republican candidate Alvin Hawkins won with 42.6% of the vote.

<sup>75</sup> The 1869 gubernatorial election saw Gilbert C. Walker, a Conservative-Republican, beat Henry H. Wells, a Radical-Republican; the percentage listed is the one received by Wells.

**Table 6: Return to Democratic Home Rule (“Redemption”) in the South, 1867-1880**

State/Elect Year	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama	-	R	-	.	-	D/R	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D
Arkansas	-	R	-	R	-	R	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D
Florida	-	R	-	R	-	R	-	D/R	-	D	-	D	-	D
Georgia	-	.	-	D/R	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D
Louisiana <sup>76</sup>	-	R	-	R	-	.	-	.	-	D	-	D	-	D
Mississippi	-	-	R	-	R	-	R	-	D/R	-	D	-	D	-
North Carolina	-	R	-	D/R	-	D/R	-	D/R	-	D	-	D	-	D
South Carolina	-	R	-	R	-	R	-	R	-	D/R	-	D	-	D
Tennessee	R	-	D	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D
Texas	-	-	R	-	-	D/R	D	-	-	D	-	D	-	D
Virginia	-	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-	D	-

Note: R indicates unified Republican control of state government on the basis of that year’s elections, D indicates unified Democratic control of state government, and D/R indicates divided state government.

<sup>76</sup> The Louisiana elections of 1872 and 1874 produced two competing results – one in which Democrats controlled both chambers, one in which Republicans did. In this period, Louisiana effectively had two functioning legislatures.

**Table 7: Percentage of Republican Seats in the U.S. House, 40th through 46th Congresses**

Congress/ Years	40th (1867-69)	41st (1869-71)	42nd (1871-73)	43rd (1873-75)	44th (1875-77)	45th (1877-79)	46th (1879-81)
Alabama	100	67	50	62.5	12.5	0	0
Arkansas	100	67	33	75	0	0	0
Florida	100	100	100	100	100	50	0
Georgia	57	43	43	22	0	0	0
Louisiana	80	100	100	83	50	33	0
Mississippi	-	100	100	83	17	0	0
North Carolina	83	83	29	37.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
South Carolina	100	100	100	100	80	60	0
Tennessee	100	100	25	70	10	20	10
Texas	-	75	25	0	0	0	0
Virginia	-	37.5	37.5	44	11	11	11

Source: Martis (1989).

Note: Percentages represent Republican totals at the *beginning* of a Congress, or upon first seating in a Congress. Dashes indicate years in which no elections were held.

**Table 8: Percentage of Republican Seats in the U.S. Senate, 40th through 46th Congresses**

Congress/ Years	40th (1867-69)	41st (1869-71)	42nd (1871-73)	43rd (1873-75)	44th (1875-77)	45th (1877-79)	46th (1879-81)
Alabama	100	100	50	50	50	50	0
Arkansas	100	100	100	100	100	50	0
Florida	100	100	100	100	50	50	0
Georgia	-	50	50	0	0	0	0
Louisiana	100	100	100	50	50	50	50
Mississippi	-	100	100	100	100	50	50
North Carolina	100	100	50	0	0	0	0
South Carolina	100	100	100	100	100	50	0
Tennessee	50	100	50	50	0	0	0
Texas	-	100	100	50	50	0	0
Virginia	-	50	50	50	0	0	0

Source: Martis (1989).

Note: Percentages represent Republican totals at the *beginning* of a Congress, or upon first seating in a Congress. Dashes indicate years in which no elections were held.

**Table 9: Percentage of Black Legislators (and Total Black Legislators) in Southern State Houses, 1868-1880**

State/Elec Year	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama	26 (26)	-	19 (19)	-	21 (21)	-	27 (27)	-	7 (7)	-	1 (1)	-	0 (0)
Arkansas	6 (5)	-	7 (6)	-	10 (8)	-	16 (15)	-	5 (5)	-	5 (5)	-	1 (1)
Florida	37 (19)	-	40 (17)	-	25 (13)	-	25 (13)	-	15 (8)	-	18 (14)	-	11 (8)
Georgia	17 (29)	-	11 (19)	-	10 (18)	-	2 (3)	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)	-	3 (5)
Louisiana <sup>77</sup>	35 (35)	-	36 (36)	-	. (.)	-	. (.)	-	18 (20)	-	12 (11)	-	11 (11)
Mississippi	-	29 (31)	-	37 (42)	-	48 (55)	-	14 (16)	-	5 (6)	-	7 (8)	-
North Carolina	15 (18)	-	16 (19)	-	10 (12)	-	11 (13)	-	6 (7)	-	5 (6)	-	3 (4)
South Carolina	60 (75)	-	61 (76)	-	60 (75)	-	65 (81)	-	57 (71)	-	7 (9)	-	7 (9)
Tennessee	-	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	1 (1)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	5 (4)
Texas	-	10 (9)	-	-	7 (6)	7 (6)	-	-	3 (3)	-	8 (7)	-	4 (4)
Virginia	-	17 (23)	-	13 (17)	-	13 (17)	-	12 (16)	-	4 (5)	-	10 (10)	-

Source: Kousser data; J. Mason Brewer, *Negro Legislators of Texas and their Descendants* (Dallas; Mathis Publishing Co., 1935); Canter Brown Jr., *Florida's Black Public Officials* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1998); Luther Porter Jackson, *Negro Office-Holders in Virginia, 1865-1895* (Norfolk, VA: Guide Quality Press, 1945).

<sup>77</sup> The Louisiana elections of 1872 and 1874 produced two competing results – one in which Democrats controlled both chambers, one in which Republicans did. In this period, Louisiana effectively had two functioning legislatures.

**Table 10: Percentage of Black Legislators (and Total Black Legislators) in Southern State Senates, 1868-1880**

State/Elec Year	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880
Alabama	3 (1)	-	.	-	15 (5)	-	18 (6)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)
Arkansas	4 (1)	-	8 (2)	-	15 (4)	-	13 (4)	-	3 (1)	-	3 (1)	-	0 (0)
Florida	13 (3)	-	21 (5)	-	13 (3)	-	21 (5)	-	25 (6)	-	13 (4)	-	9 (3)
Georgia	7 (3)	-	9 (4)	-	11 (5)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)
Louisiana <sup>78</sup>	19 (7)	-	19 (7)	-	.	-	.	-	14 (5)	-	22 (8)	-	11 (4)
Mississippi	-	15 (5)	-	19 (7)	-	24 (9)	-	14 (5)	-	3 (1)	-	0 (0)	-
North Carolina	6 (3)	-	8 (4)	-	8 (4)	-	8 (4)	-	10 (5)	-	4 (2)	-	2 (1)
South Carolina	32 (10)	-	35 (11)	-	36 (12)	-	48 (16)	-	52 (17)	-	9 (3)	-	6 (2)
Tennessee	-	0 (0)	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)	-	0 (0)
Texas	-	7 (2)	-	-	7 (2)	3 (1)	-	-	3 (1)	-	3 (1)	-	3 (1)
Virginia	-	14 (6)	-	7 (3)	-	7 (3)	-	7 (3)	-	7 (3)	-	5 (2)	-

Source: Kousser data; J. Mason Brewer, *Negro Legislators of Texas and their Descendants* (Dallas; Mathis Publishing Co., 1935); Canter Brown Jr., *Florida's Black Public Officials* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1998); Luther Porter Jackson, *Negro Office-Holders in Virginia, 1865-1895* (Norfolk, VA: Guide Quality Press, 1945).

<sup>78</sup> The Louisiana elections of 1872 and 1874 produced two competing results – one in which Democrats controlled both chambers, one in which Republicans did. In this period, Louisiana effectively had two functioning legislatures.

**Table 11: Black Members of Congress during Reconstruction**

Name (State)	Congress	Chamber	Former Slave?
Joseph Rainey (SC)	41st – 45th	House	Yes
Jefferson F. Long (GA)	41st	House	Yes
Hiram R. Revels (MS)	41st	Senate	No
Robert C. De Large (SC)	42nd	House	No
Robert B. Elliott (SC)	42nd – 43rd	House	No
Benjamin S. Turner (AL)	42nd	House	Yes
Josiah T. Walls (FL)	42nd – 44th	House	Yes
Richard H. Cain (SC)	43rd, 45th	House	No
John R. Lynch (MS)	43rd – 44th, 47th	House	Yes
Alonso J. Ransier (SC)	43rd	House	No
James T. Rapier (AL)	43rd	House	No
Blanche K. Bruce (MS)	44th – 46th	Senate	Yes
Jermiah Haralson (AL)	44th	House	Yes
John Adams Hyman (NC)	44th	House	Yes
Charles E. Nash (LA)	44th	House	No
Robert Smalls (SC)	44th – 45th, 47th – 49th	House	Yes

Source: *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*