

UNITED STATES HISTORY

SECTION II

Part A

(Suggested writing time—45 minutes)

Percent of Section II score—45

**Directions:** The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-H and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. High scores will be earned only by essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period.

1. In the early nineteenth century, Americans sought to resolve their political disputes through compromise, yet by 1860 this no longer seemed possible. Analyze the reasons for this change.

Use the documents and your knowledge of the period 1820–1860 in constructing your response.

**Document A**

Source: Senator Henry Clay, speech to the Senate, February 12, 1833

I merely throw out these sentiments for the purpose of showing you that South Carolina, having declared her purpose to be this, to make an experiment whether, by a course of legislation, in a conventional form, or legislative form of enactment, she can defeat the execution of certain laws of the United States, I for one, will express my opinion that I believe it is utterly impracticable, whatever course of legislation she may choose to adopt, for her to succeed. . . . I say it is impossible that South Carolina ever desired for a moment to become a separate and independent state.

**Document B**

Source: "Declaration of the National Anti-Slavery Convention," first annual report of the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1834

[W]e believe and affirm:

That every American citizen who retains a human being in involuntary bondage as his property is (according to Scripture) a MAN STEALER.

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free. . . .

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are . . . , before God, utterly null and void, being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative. . . .

[T]hat no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves. . . . [That], if compensation is to be given at all, it should be given to the outraged and guiltless slaves and not to those who have plundered and abused them.

[That] we concede the Congress under the present national compact, has no right to interfere with any of the slave states, in relation to this momentous subject [slavery]. But we maintain that Congress has a right . . . to suppress the domestic slave trade between the several states, and to abolish slavery in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its [Congress's] exclusive jurisdiction.

Document C

Source: Resolution of the Pinckney Committee, House of Representatives, May 18, 1836

And whereas it is extremely important and desirable, that the agitation of this subject should be finally arrested, for the purpose of restoring tranquillity to the public mind, your committee respectfully recommend the adoption of the following additional resolution:

All petitions, memorials, resolutions, propositions, or papers relating in any way or to any extent whatsoever, to the subject of slavery or the abolition of slavery, shall without being either printed or referred, be laid on the table and that no further action whatever shall be had thereon.

Document D

Source: Senator Daniel Webster, speech to the Senate, March 7, 1850

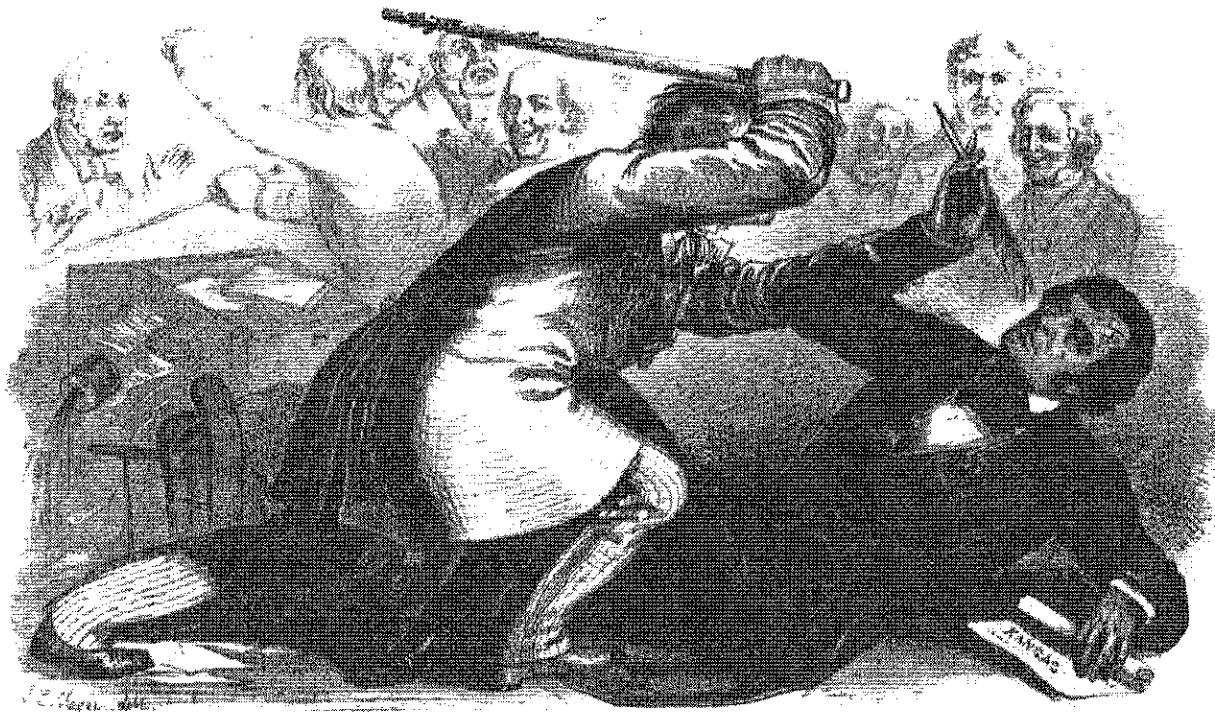
Mr. President, I wish to speak today, not as a Northern man, but as an American. . . .

I will state . . . one complaint of the South . . . that there has been found at the North, among individuals and among the legislatures of the North, a disinclination to perform fully their constitutional duties in regard to the return of persons bound to service who have escaped into the free states. In that respect, it is my judgement that the South is right and the North is wrong. . . .

I hear with pain and anguish the word "secession," especially when it falls from the lips of those who are eminently [*sic*] patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. . . . I hold the idea of a separation of these states—those that are free to form one government and those that are slaveholding to form another—as a moral impossibility. We could not separate the states by any such line if we were to draw it. We could not sit down here today and draw a line of separation that would satisfy any five men in the country.

Document E

Source: Illustration by J.L. Magee, 1856



**SOUTHERN CHIVALRY — ARGUMENT VERSUS CLUB'S.**

Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach  
Division of Art, Prints, and Photographs.  
The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Document F

Source: Muscogee, Georgia, *Herald*, quoted in the *New York Tribune*, September 10, 1856

Free society! We sicken at the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists? All northern, and especially the New England, states are devoid of society fitted for well-bred southern gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets with is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel, and small farmers who do their own drudgery, and yet are hardly fit for association with a southern gentleman's body servant.

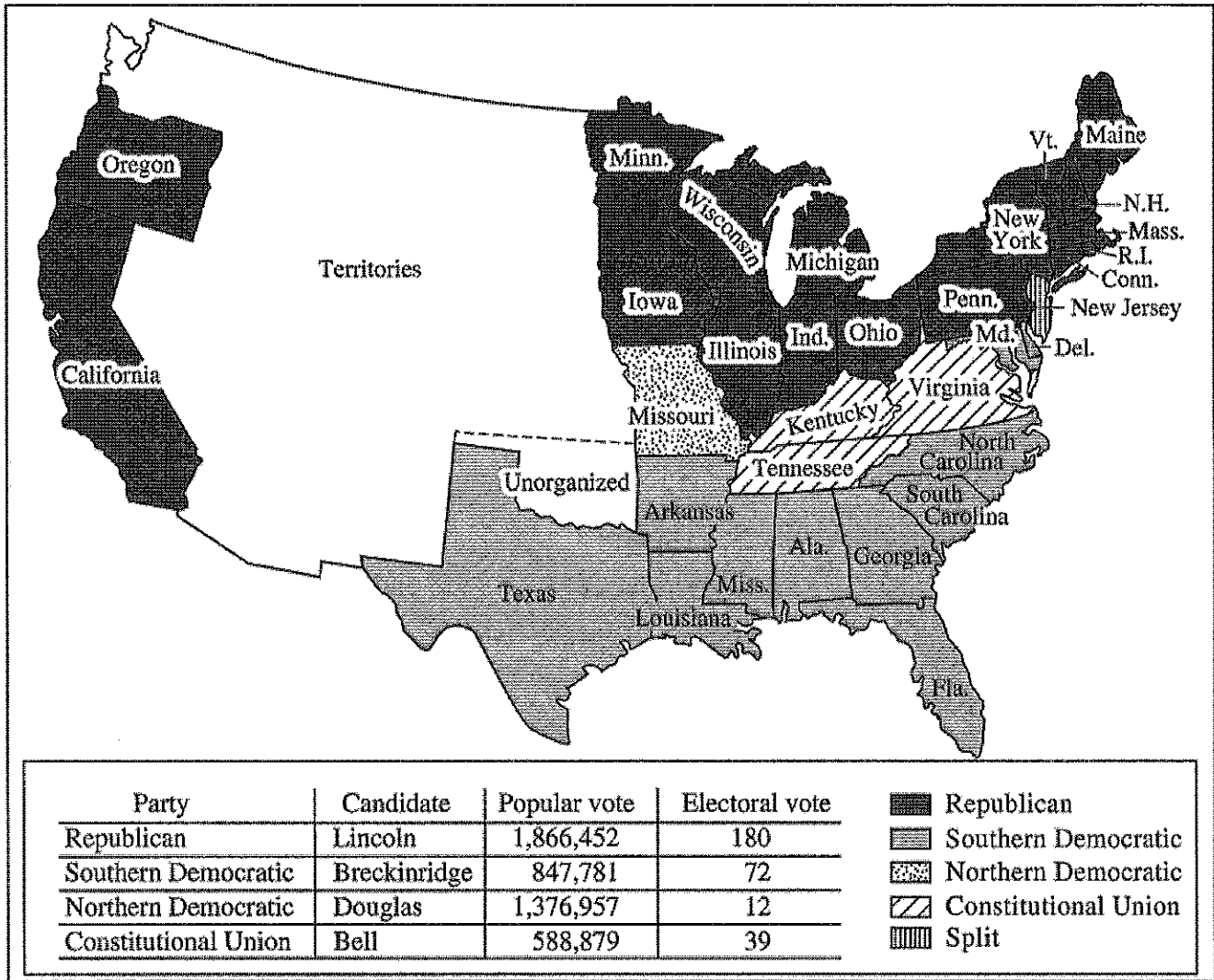
Document G

Source: Abraham Lincoln, speech at Alton, Illinois, October 15, 1858

You may say . . . that all of this difficulty in regard to the institution of slavery is the mere agitation of office seekers and ambitious Northern politicians. . . . But is it true that all of the difficulty and agitation we have in regard to this institution of slavery springs from office seeking—from the mere ambition of politicians? . . . How many times have we had danger from this question? . . . [D]oes not this question make a disturbance outside of political circles? Does it not enter into the churches and rend them asunder? . . . Is it not this same mighty, deep-seated power that somehow operates on the minds of men, exciting and stirring them up in every avenue of society—in politics, in religion, in literature, in morals, in all manifold relations in life? Is this the work of politicians?

Document H

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 1860



END OF DOCUMENTS FOR QUESTION 1

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## The Fallout of Compromise: 1820-1860

After half of a century of development and growth, the American people witnessed an ominous threat to their ~~precious~~ precious Union. The nation was founded by the compromises of the Founding Fathers, ~~but~~ by and since that time compromise kept the nation together. However, it was the increasing tensions surrounding slavery that ultimately led to the breakdown of compromise in the middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. Compromise could not be easily achieved in this time period due to the political recriminations and conflicts concerning ~~the~~ slavery. In addition, the moral and social stance ~~of~~ on the issue divided the North and the South, and made compromise difficult. Finally, the eventual breakdown of trust between competing parties led to a collapse in compromise. Therefore, by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century compromise broke down in America due to the issue of slavery and the division it spawned.

Between 1820 and 1860 there was a significant shift in the political view on slavery that ultimately led to the collapse of compromise. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 and the Compromise of 1850 were landmark agreements that Henry Clay engineered to keep the nation together. In that time, the Southern states did not adamantly politicize their stance on slavery. In 1833 Henry Clay explicitly stated that "it is impossible that South Carolina

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ever desired for a moment to secure a separate & or "independent state." (A) In addition, the Anti-Slavery Convention in 1834, though opposed to slavery, did not believe Congress had the "right to interfere with any of the slave states." (B) These documents show that early political stances did not significantly threaten compromise. However, after northern disgust for the Compromise of 1850 ~~and its~~ (specifically over the Fugitive Slave Law) and the issuing of the Wilmot Proviso, slavery then threatened political disintegration. This tension came forth in the election of 1860 where not a single Southern state voted for Lincoln.<sup>(A)</sup> This political division over the issue of slavery eventually led to Southern secession, and thus a ~~be~~ collapse in compromise.

Furthermore, the ~~new~~ moral and social conflict over slavery rose to new levels during this time period and thus threatened compromise. The large reform movement in the US during this time included an increase in the power of abolitionism. Garrison's "Liberator" called for immediate emancipation, and many free African Americans, such as Frederick Douglass, called for abolition. The publishing of Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" inflamed ~~new~~ <sup>new</sup> passions for abolitionism in the North. ~~Conversely~~ Similarly, the South began its own crusade against abolition. The Herald in Georgia strongly censured the Northerners by claiming that they were "devoid of society fitted for well-bred southern gentlemen." (F) Thus, moral and social division over slavery created

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numerous complications to compromise. Daniel Webster recognized the severity of such a clash by calling it a "moral impossibility" to have "peaceful secession." (D) Lincoln's speech in 1858 also recognized that the slavery issue ~~was~~ also made "a disturbance outside of political circles." (G) Thus, the moral and social divide over slavery led to a full out compromise.

A final factor that contributed to the death of compromise was the lack of trust between competing parties. The rising tensions in slavery led to a rise in suspicion between the North and South. The mayhem shown in the cartoon by Magee represents ~~the~~ <sup>this</sup> ~~the~~ lack of trust. The cartoon is a ~~propaganda~~ <sup>created</sup> piece ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> incite negative emotions, and so ~~such a work of literature~~ it does not encourage compromise. (E). Also, the issue over the Kansas-Nebraska Act led to increased suspicion. John Brown's radical raids on Harper's Ferry exasperated the Southerners, and the ensuing civil war, or "Bleeding Kansas," shows the lack ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> faith of compromise. In addition, the beating over the head of Senator Sumner created widespread ~~distress~~ distrust for the South by the North. It is impossible to reach compromise without trust; that is what changed in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The breakdown of trust, due to slavery, led to the breakdown of compromise.

By 1860 the American nation underwent a transformation



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that led to the collapse of a foundational principle: compromise. Compromise no longer yielded its strength in America during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> rising issue of slavery. ~~The issue~~ ~~Slavery~~ Washington dealt with slavery in the past by compromise or by hiding it under the ~~table~~, as seen in the resolution of the Pinckney Committee. (C) However, with increased ~~causing~~ tensions politically, ~~and~~ ~~socially~~, ~~and~~ and socially trust broke down between the North and South, and compromise no longer had any power. Slavery radicalized and galvanized slave supporters and abolitionists alike to the point of no compromise. Unfortunately for ~~the~~ the American nation, the resulting fall-out in compromise led to the bloody Civil War.

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The cause of political dispute was mostly over slavery — should the Union be free of slaves, or should it ~~let~~ leave the issue alone.

At first, the government tried to ease the problem in two ways: the gag rule and the Missouri Compromise. The gag rule restricted the issue of slavery being laid upon the table in order to reduce conflict among the parties. The ~~the~~ Missouri Compromise was another way in reducing dispute by equalizing the number of free and slave states so that the number of senators ~~was~~ would be the same in both areas. These two factors, however, became useless as time passed by.

One of the main reasons political parties became heated was the Western expansion in Polk's presidency due to "Manifest Destiny". As new territories were founded and wanted "stateship", the problem whether ~~if~~ they should be slave states or not brought up a huge problem. The South, of course, wanted the new territories to be slave states ~~to~~ <sup>so</sup> to represent more slave-favoring senators in the government. The North, on the other hand, was utterly opposing this. After the Mexican-American War came to an end, things ~~became~~ worsened. As the Wilmot Proviso ~~was rejected~~ (new territories of New Mexico and Utah should be free) was rejected, Free-Soilers came into being. Free-Soilers ~~to~~ argued that the government was overruled by Slave Powers (favoring slavery) and that the rejection of the Proviso was unfair. With the North and South difference and the formation of a new party, ~~the~~ government was cracking.

Compromise in political disputes became nearly impossible as political "blunders" ~~happened~~ <sup>happened</sup> more frequently. Of the many blunders, Stephen Douglas' acts can be considered the most devastating. Douglas tried to cool the heat in the political disputes by ~~putting~~ <sup>laying</sup> out the policy Compromise of 1850. This policy was good in that it equalized the number of free and slave states by making

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California free and Texas a slave state. However, the problem was the new territories. Douglas tried to liberate the issue from the federal government leaving it up to popular sovereignty (settlers decision).

This decision of Douglas, however, exacerbated the situation. Abolitionists from the North and those favoring slavery from the South ~~all~~ roamed into the new territories to gain their ways. Among the states that were left to popular sovereignty was Kansas, due to the Nebraska-Kansas Act in Pierce's presidency. Kansas soon became a hostile region filled with both sides of the conflict. With John Brown's attack, Kansas became "bloody" in a matter of days. With conflict in the West, political parties were far from compromising. The problem had become too nation-wide.

Changes among the parties, also gave boost to conflict. Free-soilers and Northern Democrats same in ideal that slavery should be abolished, fused to make ~~the~~ a new party, "Republican". ~~As~~ As a definite line crossed in between parties, compromising was not the problem but ~~secession~~ rather secession was.

After Republican representative Lincoln was elected president, the south seceded from the Union, and war was ~~at~~ about to begin.

As can be seen, at first, compromising was possible. However, with changes in geographical and political ways, ~~the~~ diverse disputes over slavery occurred. This made everything so complicated, as the problem was not just regarding slavery, making compromise out of the question