

Unit 5 HOH

To what extent did the Compromise of 1850 fuel the rising sectional disputes and growing animosity between the North and South instead of accomplishing its goal of settling the issue of slavery?

Document A

CAUTION!!
COLORED PEOPLE
OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,
You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and
advised, to avoid conversing with the
Watchmen and Police Officers
of Boston,
For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR &**
ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as
KIDNAPPERS
AND
Slave Catchers,
And they have already been actually employed in
KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING
SLAVES. Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY,**
and the *Welfare of the Fugitives among you,* *Shun*
them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS**
on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.
Keep a Sharp Look Out for
KIDNAPPERS, and have
TOP EYE open.
APRIL 24, 1861.

Document B

SIR, It will be recollected by all present, at the last session of Congress, an amendment was moved by me by which slavery should be excluded from any territory that might be subsequently be acquired by the United States from the Republic of Mexico....But, sir, the issue now presented is not whether slavery shall exist unmolested where it now is, but whether it shall be carried to new and distant regions, now free, where the footprint of a slave cannot be found. I ask not that slavery be abolished. I demand that this Government preserve the integrity of free territory against the aggressions of slavery, against its wrongful usurpations.... Shall these fair provinces be the inheritance and homes of the white labor of freemen or the black labor of slaves? Shall the South be permitted, by aggression, by invasion of the right, by subduing free territory, and planting slavery upon it, to wrest these provinces from northern freemen, and turn them to the accomplishment of their own sectional purposes and schemes?

David Wilmot

Document C

.... How can the Union be saved? To this I answer, there is but one way by which it can be, and that is by adopting such measures as will satisfy the states belonging to the Southern section that they can remain in the Union consistently with their honor and their safety. There is, again, only one way by which this can be effected, and that is by removing the causes by which this belief [that the South cannot honorably and safely remain in the Union] has been produced. Do that and discontent will cease, harmony and kind feelings between the sections be restored, and every apprehension of danger to the Union removed. The question, then, is, By what can this be done? But, before I undertake to answer this question, I propose to show by what the Union cannot be saved.

It cannot, then, be saved by eulogies on the Union, however splendid or numerous. The cry of "Union, Union, the glorious Union!" can no more prevent disunion than the cry of "Health, health, glorious health!" on the part of the physician can save a patient lying dangerously ill, It usually comes from our assailants. But we cannot believe them to be sincere; for, if they loved the Union, they would necessarily be devoted to the Constitution. It made the Union, and to destroy the Constitution would be to destroy the Union. But the only reliable and certain evidence of devotion to the Constitution is to abstain, on the one hand, from violating it, and to repel, on the other, all attempts to violate it. It is only by faithfully performing these high duties that the Constitution can be preserved, and with it the Union.... The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer but the Constitution; and no concession or surrender to make. She has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender.

John C. Calhoun March 4, 1850

Document D

Mr. President, I hear with distress and anguish the word "secession. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! Who is so foolish--I beg everybody's pardon--as to expect to see any such thing? There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. No, sir! No, sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the Union; but, sir, I see, as plainly as I see the sun in heaven, what the disruption itself must produce; i see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe.... Why, what would be the result? Where is the line to be drawn? What States are to secede? What is to remain American? What am I to be? An American no longer? What is to become of the public lands? How is any one of the thirty States to defend itself? Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than now devolve upon us, for the preservation of this Constitution, and the harmony and peace of all who are destined to live under it. Let us make our generation one of the strongest and brightest links in that golden chain, which is destined, I fondly believe, to grapple the people of all the States to this Constitution for ages to come.

Daniel Webster, March 7, 1850

Document E

And be it further enacted, That the Circuit Courts of the United States shall from time to time enlarge the number of the commissioners, with a view to afford reasonable facilities to reclaim fugitives from labor, and to the prompt discharge of the duties imposed by this act.... shall grant certificates to such claimants, upon satisfactory proof being made, with authority to take and remove such fugitives from service or labor, under the restrictions herein contained, to the State or Territory from which such persons may have escaped or fled.... and all good citizens are hereby commanded to aid and assist in the prompt and efficient execution of this law, whenever their services may be required, as aforesaid, for that purpose; and said warrants shall run, and be executed by said officers, any where in the State within which they are issued.... And be it further enacted, That when a person held to service or labor in any State or Territory of the United States, heretofore or shall hereafter escape into another State or Territory of the United States, the person or persons to whom such service labor may be due... may pursue and reclaim such fugitive person, either by procuring a warrant from some one of the courts, judges, or commissioners aforesaid, of the proper circuit, district, or county, for the apprehension of such fugitive from service or labor, or by seizing and arresting such fugitive....

1850 Fugitive Slave Act

Document F

THAT the time has come for the South to look to her interests, when considered in connection with the great political strife now existing between the two sections of this country, I think no true Southerner, who loves liberty and hates oppression, will attempt to deny... The leaders and oracles of the most powerful party in the United States have denounced us as tyrants and unprincipled heathens, through the whole civilized world... In their school-houses they have taught their children to look upon the slaveholder as the especial disciple of the devil himself. They have published books and pamphlets in which the institution of slavery is held up to the world as a blot and a stain upon the escutcheon of America's honor as a nation. They have established Abolition Societies among them for the purpose of raising funds -- first to send troops to Kansas to cut the throats of all the slaveholders there, and now to send emissaries among us to incite our slaves to rebellion against the authority of their masters, and thereby endanger the lives of our people and the destruction of our property.... They have virtually repealed the Fugitive Slave Law, and declare their determination not to abide by the decision of the Supreme Court, guaranteeing to us the right to claim our property wherever found in the United States. And, in every conceivable way, the whole Northern people, as a mass, have shown a most implacable hostility to us and our most sacred rights; and this, too, without the slightest provocation on the part of the South. Never, in a single instance, has the South, in any shape or form, interfered with the North in her municipal regulations; but, on the contrary, has tamely submitted to paying tribute to the support of her manufactures, and the establishment of her commercial greatness...

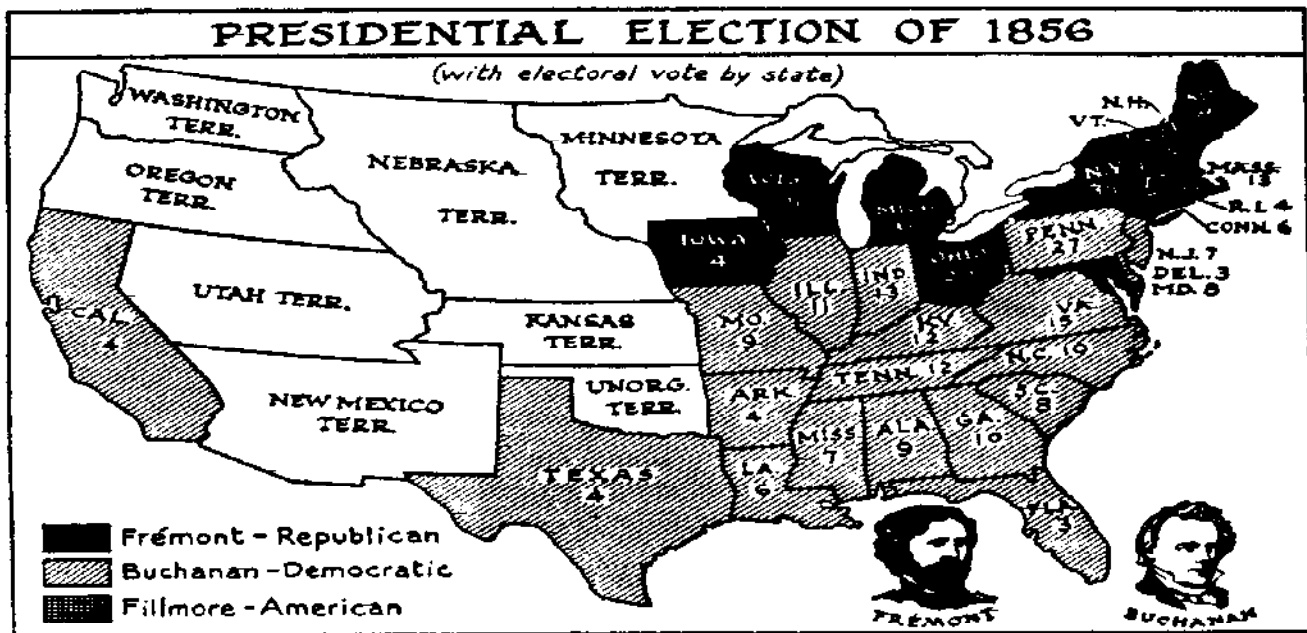
R. B. Rhett, Threats Of Secession

Document G

...a negro of the African race was regarded by them as an article of property, and held, and bought and sold as such, in every one of the thirteen colonies which united in the Declaration of Independence, and afterwards formed the Constitution of the United States.... The only two provisions which point to them and include them, treat them as property, and make it the duty of the government to protect it; no other power, in relation to this race, is to be found in the Constitution; and as it is a government of special, delegated, powers, no authority beyond these two provisions can be constitutionally exercised.

.... if the Constitution recognizes the right of property of the master in a slave, and makes no distinction between that description of property and other property owned by a citizen, no tribunal, acting under the authority of the United States, whether it be legislative, executive, or judicial, has a right to draw such a distinction, or deny to it the benefit of the provisions and guarantees which have been provided for the protection of private property against the encroachments of the government. Upon these considerations, it is the opinion of the court that the act of Congress which prohibited a citizen from holding and owning property of this kind in the territory of the United States north of the line therein mentioned, is not warranted by the Constitution, and is therefore void; and that neither Dred Scott himself, nor any of his family, were made free by being carried into this territory;

Dred Scott v Sanford, 1857.



Document I

Mr. President, I have not brought this question forward as a Northern man or as a Southern man. I am unwilling to recognize such divisions and distinctions. I have brought it forward as an American Senator, representing a state which is true to this principle, and which has approved of my action in respect to the Nebraska bill. I have brought it forward not as an act of justice to the South more than to the North. I have presented it especially as an act of justice to the people of those territories, and of the states to be formed therefrom, now and in all time to come. I have nothing to say about Northern rights or Southern rights. I know of no such divisions or distinctions under the Constitution. The bill does equal and exact justice to the whole Union, and every part of it; it violates the rights of no state or territory, but places each on a perfect equality, and leaves the people thereof to the free enjoyment of all their rights under the Constitution.... I say frankly that, in my opinion, this measure will be as popular at the North as at the South, when its provisions and principles shall have been fully developed and become well understood.

Stephen Douglas, March 3, 1854

Document J



Document K

The next question propounded to me by Mr. Lincoln is, Can the people of a Territory in any lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State constitution? I answer emphatically, as Mr. Lincoln has heard me answer a hundred times from every stump in Illinois, that in my opinion the people of a Territory can, by lawful means, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State constitution...It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution, the people have the lawful means to introduce it or exclude it as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere, unless it is supported by local police regulations...Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be on that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a Slave Territory or a Free Territory is perfect and complete under the Nebraska bill.

Stephen Douglas, Freeport, Illinois, August 1858

Document L

Constitutional Amendments

1. Slavery would be prohibited in any territory of the United States "now held, or hereafter acquired," north of latitude 36 degrees, 30 minutes line. In territories south of this line, slavery of the African race was "hereby recognized" and could not be interfered with by Congress. Furthermore, property in African slaves was to be "protected by all the departments of the territorial government during its continuance." States would be admitted to the Union from any territory with or without slavery as their constitutions provided.
2. Congress was forbidden to abolish slavery in places under its jurisdiction within a slave state such as a military post.
4. Congress could not prohibit or interfere with the interstate slave trade.
6. No future amendment of the Constitution could change these amendments or authorize or empower Congress to interfere with slavery within any slave state

John J Crittenden's proposal to Congress, 1860

Document M

