

SS-6 Study Guide Chapter 13 - Background to the Conflict

Lesson 4: A Time for Hard Decisions

1. Who were the candidates for President in 1860?

Candidates in the U.S. Presidential Election of 1860:

Stephen Douglas – Ran as a member of the Democratic Party.

He argued that western settlers should decide for themselves whether to allow slavery,

John Breckinridge – supported by southern Democrats.

He thought that the government should allow slavery everywhere in the west.

Abraham Lincoln – ran as a member of the Republican Party.

He spoke out strongly against the spread of slavery.

2. What was the first state to secede from the Union?

After Lincoln won the 1860 Presidential election, South Carolina carried out their pre-election threat that they would not have a President who was against slavery.

South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860.

3. Who was President of the Confederacy?

The seven states that made up the Confederate States of America elected Jefferson Davis as President.

Jefferson Davis had been a Senator from Mississippi.

4. Where is Fort Sumter located?

Fort Sumter was located on an island located in the Charleston Harbor, off of the coast of South Carolina.

5. Was Fort Sumter a Confederate or a Union fort?

Fort Sumter was located in the Confederate States of America.

It was one of the few forts in the Confederacy that still remained under Union control.

6. Who was in command of Fort Sumter?

Major Robert Anderson was in command of Fort Sumter.

Major Anderson had messaged the Union that supplies at the fort were almost gone.

If supplies were not sent to the fort soon, General Anderson knew that he would have to surrender Fort Sumter to the Confederacy.

7. How did President Lincoln decide to help the men of Fort Sumter?

President Lincoln's goal: Keep Fort Sumter under Union control.

Lincoln's choices:

He could send supplies to the fort and the Confederates might attack.
He could send troops to the fort and the Confederates would surely attack.
He could do nothing and Major Anderson would be forced to surrender
Fort Sumter to the Confederacy.

Lincoln's decision:

He would send supply ships to the fort and see how the Confederates would react.
He wanted to prevent fighting and thought that sending supplies was a precautionary action.

8. What did Jefferson Davis decide to do about Fort Sumter?

President Davis's goal: Take control of Fort Sumter for the Confederate states.

Davis's problems:

Union troops still held the fort.
President Lincoln was now sending supply ships to help the Union troops.

Davis's decision:

Davis decided to attack the fort before the Union supply ships arrived.
On April 12, 1861, Confederate soldiers fired on Fort Sumter.

9. What major event resulted from the attack on Fort Sumter?

One day after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, General Anderson and his men ran out of ammunition and the Union was forced to surrender the fort to the Confederacy.

Lincoln quickly called for Americans to join an army to stop the rebellion.

The Civil War had begun.