

The Ten Causes Of The War Between The States

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Historians have long debated the causes of the war and the Southern perspective differs greatly from the Northern perspective. Based upon the study of original documents of the War Between The States (Civil War) era and facts and information published by Confederate Veterans, Confederate Chaplains, Southern writers and Southern Historians before, during, and after the war, I present the facts, opinions, and conclusions stated in the following article.

Technically the 10 causes listed are reasons for Southern secession. The only cause of the war was that the South was invaded and responded to Northern aggression.

I respectfully disagree with those who claim that the War Between the States was fought over slavery or that the abolition of slavery in the Revolutionary Era or early Federal period would have prevented war. It is my opinion that war was inevitable between the North and South due to complex political and cultural differences. The famous Englishman Winston Churchill stated that the war between the North and South was one of the most unpreventable wars in history. The Cause that the Confederate States of America fought for (1861-1865) was Southern Independence from the United States of America. Many parallels exist between the War for American Independence (1775-1783) and the War for Southern Independence.

There were 10 political causes of the war (causes of Southern Secession) ---one of which was slavery--- which was a scapegoat for all the differences that existed between the North and South. The Northern industrialists had wanted a war since about 1830 to get the South's resources (land-cotton-coal-timber-minerals) for pennies on the dollar. All wars are economic and are always between centralists and decentralists. The North would have found an excuse to invade the South even if slavery had never existed.

A war almost occurred during 1828-1832 over the tariff when South Carolina passed nullification laws. The U.S. congress had increased the tariff rate on imported products to 40% (known as the tariff of abominations in Southern States). This crisis had nothing to do with slavery. If slavery had never existed --period--or had been eliminated at the time the Declaration of Independence was written in 1776 or anytime prior to 1860 it is my opinion that there would still have been a war sooner or later.

On a human level there were 5 causes of the war--New England Greed-New England Radicals--New England Fanatics--New England Zealots--and New England Hypocrites. During "So Called Reconstruction" (1865-1877) the New England Industrialists got what they had really wanted for 40 years--THE SOUTH'S RESOURCES FOR PENNIES ON THE DOLLAR. It was a political coalition between the New England economic interests and the New England fanatics and zealots that caused Southern secession to be necessary for economic survival and safety of the population.

1. TARIFF

Prior to the war about 75% of the money to operate the Federal Government was derived from the Southern States via an unfair sectional tariff on imported goods and 50% of the total 75% was from just 4 Southern states--Virginia-North Carolina--South Carolina and Georgia. Only 10%--20% of this tax money was being returned to the South. The Southern states were being treated as an agricultural colony of the North and bled dry. John Randolph of Virginia's remarks in opposition to the tariff of 1820 demonstrates that fact. The North claimed that they fought the war to preserve the Union but the New England Industrialists who were in control of the North were actually supporting preservation of the Union to maintain and increase revenue from the tariff. The industrialists wanted the South to pay for the industrialization of America at no expense to them. Revenue bills introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives prior to the War Between the States were biased, unfair and inflammatory to the South. Abraham Lincoln had promised the Northern industrialists that he would increase the tariff rate if he was elected president of the United States. Lincoln increased the rate to a level that exceeded even the "Tariff of Abominations" 40% rate that had so infuriated the South during the 1828-1832 eras (between 50 and 51% on iron goods). The election of a president that was Anti-Southern on all issues and politically associated with the New England industrialists, fanatics, and zealots brought about the Southern secession movement.

2. CENTRALIZATION VERSUS STATES RIGHTS

The United States of America was founded as a Constitutional Federal Republic in 1789 composed of a Limited Federal Government and Sovereign States. The North wanted to and did alter the form of Government this nation was founded upon. The Confederate States of America fought to preserve Constitutional Limited Federal Government as established by America's founding fathers who were primarily Southern Gentlemen from Virginia. Thus Confederate soldiers were fighting for rights that had been paid for in blood by their forefathers upon the battlefields of the American Revolution. Abraham Lincoln had a blatant disregard for The Constitution of the United States of America. His War of aggression Against the South changed America from a Constitutional Federal Republic to a Democracy (with Socialist leanings) and broke the original Constitution. The infamous Socialist Karl Marx sent Lincoln a letter of congratulations after his reelection in 1864. A considerable number of European Socialists came to America and fought for the Union (North).

3. CHRISTIANITY VERSUS SECULAR HUMANISM

The South believed in basic Christianity as presented in the Holy Bible. The North had many Secular Humanists (atheists, transcendentalists and non-Christians). Southerners were afraid of what kind of country America might become if the North had its way. Secular Humanism is the belief that there is no God and that man, science and government can solve all problems. This philosophy advocates human rather than religious values. Reference: Frank Conner's book "The South under Siege 1830-2000."

4. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Southerners and Northerners were of different Genetic Lineage's. Southerners were primarily of Western English (original Britons), Scottish, and Irish lineage (Celtic) whereas Northerners tended to be of Anglo-Saxon and Danish (Viking) extraction. The two cultures had been at war and at odds for over 1000 years before they arrived in America. Our ancient ancestors in Western England under King Arthur humbled the Saxon princes at the battle of Baden Hill (circa 497 AD --516 AD). The cultural differences that contributed to the War Between the States (1861-1865) had existed for 1500 years or more.

5. CONTROL OF WESTERN TERRITORIES

The North wanted to control Western States and Territories such as Kansas and Nebraska. New England formed Immigrant Aid Societies and sent settlers to these areas that were politically attached to the North. They passed laws against slavery that Southerners considered punitive. These political actions told Southerners they were not welcome in the new states and territories. It was all about control--slavery was a scapegoat.

6. NORTHERN INDUSTRIALISTS WANTED THE SOUTH'S RESOURCES

The Northern Industrialists wanted a war to use as an excuse to get the South's resources for pennies on the dollar. They began a campaign about 1830 that would influence the common people of the North and create enmity that would allow them to go to war against the South. These Northern Industrialists brought up a morality claim against the South alleging the evils of slavery. The Northern Hypocrites conveniently neglected to publicize the fact that 5 New England States (Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and New York) were primarily responsible for the importation of most of the slaves from Africa to America. These states had both private and state owned fleets of ships.

7. SLANDER OF THE SOUTH BY NORTHERN NEWSPAPERS

This political cause ties in to the above listed efforts by New England Industrialists. Beginning about 1830 the Northern Newspapers began to slander the South. The Industrialists used this tool to indoctrinate the common people of the North. They used slavery as a scapegoat and brought the morality claim up to a feverish pitch. Southerners became tired of reading in the Northern Newspapers about what bad and evil people they were just because their neighbor down the road had a few slaves. This propaganda campaign created hostility between the ordinary citizens of the two regions and created the animosity necessary for war. The Northern Industrialists worked poor whites in the factories of the North under terrible conditions for 18 hours a day (including children). When the workers became old and infirm they were fired. It is a historical fact that during this era there were thousands of old people living homeless on the streets in the cities of the North. In the South a slave was cared for from birth to death. Also the diet and living conditions of Southern slaves was superior to that of most white Northern factory workers. Southerners deeply resented this New England hypocrisy and slander.

8. NEW ENGLANDERS ATTEMPTED TO INSTIGATE MASSIVE SLAVE REBELLIONS IN THE SOUTH

Abolitionists were a small but vocal and militant group in New England who demanded instant abolition of slavery in the South. These fanatics and zealots were calling for massive slave uprisings that would result in the murder of Southern men, women and children. Southerners were aware that such an uprising had occurred in Santa Domingo in the 1790 era and that the French (white) population had been massacred. The abolitionists published a terrorist manifesto and tried to smuggle 100,000 copies into the South showing slaves how to murder their masters at night. Then when John Brown raided Harpers Ferry, Virginia in 1859 the political situation became inflammatory. Prior to this event there had been more abolition societies in the South than in the North. Lincoln and most of the Republican Party (64 members of congress) had adopted a political platform in support of terrorist acts against the South. Some (allegedly including Lincoln) had contributed monetarily as supporters of John Brown's terrorist activities. Again slavery was used as a scapegoat for all differences that existed between the North and South.

9. SLAVERY

Indirectly slavery was a cause of the war. Most Southerners did not own slaves and would not have fought for the protection of slavery. However they believed that the North had no Constitutional right to free slaves held by citizens of Sovereign Southern States. Prior to the war there were five times as many abolition societies in the South as in the North. Virtually all educated Southerners were in favor of gradual emancipation of slaves. Gradual emancipation would have allowed the economy and labor system of the South to gradually adjust to a free paid labor system without economic collapse. Furthermore, since the New England States were responsible for the development of slavery in America, Southerners saw the morality claims by the North as blatant hypocrisy. The first state to legalize slavery had been Massachusetts in 1641 and this law was directed primarily at Indians. In colonial times the economic infrastructure of the port cities of the North was dependent upon the slave trade. The first slave ship in America, "THE DESIRE", was fitted out in Marblehead, Massachusetts. Further proof that Southerners were not fighting to preserve slavery is found in the diary of an officer in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. He stated that "he had never met a man in the Army of Northern Virginia that claimed he was fighting to preserve slavery". If the war had been over slavery, the composition of the politicians, officers, enlisted men, and even African Americans would have been different. Confederate General Robert E. Lee had freed his slaves (Custis Washington estate) prior to 1863 whereas Union General Grant's wife Julia did not free her slaves until after the war when forced to do so by the 13th amendment to the constitution. Grant even stated that if the abolitionists claimed he was fighting to free slaves that he would offer his services to the South. Mildred Lewis Rutherford (1852-1928) was for many years the historian for the United Daughters Of The Confederacy (UDC). In her book Truths Of History she stated that there were more slaveholders in the Union Army (315,000) than the Confederate Army (200,000). Statistics and estimates also show that about 300,000 blacks supported the Confederacy versus about 200,000 for the Union. Clearly the war would have been fought along different lines if it had been fought over slavery. The famous English author Charles Dickens stated "the Northern onslaught upon Southern slavery is a specious piece of humbug designed to mask their desire for the economic control of the Southern states."

10. NORTHERN AGGRESSION AGAINST SOUTHERN STATES

Proof that Abraham Lincoln wanted war may be found in the manner he handled the Fort Sumter incident. Original correspondence between Lincoln and Naval Captain G.V.Fox shows proof that Lincoln acted with deceit and willfully provoked South Carolina into firing on the fort (A TARIFF COLLECTION FACILITY). It was politically important that the South be provoked into firing the first shot so that Lincoln could claim the Confederacy started the war. Additional proof that Lincoln wanted war is the fact that Lincoln refused to meet with a Confederate peace delegation. They remained in Washington for 30 days and returned to Richmond only after it became apparent that Lincoln wanted war and refused to meet and discuss a peace agreement. After setting up the Fort Sumter incident for the purpose of starting a war, Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to put down what he called a rebellion. He intended to march Union troops across Virginia and North Carolina to attack South Carolina. Virginia and North Carolina were not going to allow such an unconstitutional and criminal act of aggression against a sovereign sister Southern State. Lincoln's act of aggression caused the secession of the upper Southern States.

On April 17th 1861, Governor Letcher of Virginia sent this message to Washington DC: "I have only to say that the militia of Virginia will not be furnished to the powers of Washington for any such use or purpose as they have in view. Your object is to subjugate the Southern states and the requisition made upon me for such a object-an object in my

judgement not within the purview of the constitution or the act of 1795, will not be complied with. You have chosen to inaugurate civil war; having done so we will meet you in a spirit as determined as the administration has exhibited toward the South."

The WAR BETWEEN THE STATES 1861-1865 occurred due to many complex causes and factors as enumerated above. Those who make claims that "the war was over slavery" or that if slavery had been abolished in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was signed or in 1789 when The Constitution of the United States of America was signed, that war would not have occurred between North and South are being very simplistic in their views and opinions.

The following conversation between English ship Captain Hillyar and Capt. Raphael Semmes-Confederate Ship CSS Sumter (and after 1862 CSS Alabama) occurred during the war on August 5th, 1861. It is a summary from a well-educated Southerner who is stating his reasons for fighting. Captain Hillyar expressed surprised at Captain Semme's contention that the people of the South were "defending ourselves against robbers with knives at our throats", and asked for further clarification as to how this was so, the exchange below occurred. I especially was impressed with Semmes' assessment of Yankee motives - the creation of "Empire"!

Semmes: "Simply that the machinery of the Federal Government, under which we have lived, and which was designed for the common benefit, has been made the means of despoiling the South, to enrich the North", and I explained to him the workings of the iniquitous tariffs, under the operation of which the South had, in effect, been reduced to a dependent colonial condition, almost as abject as that of the Roman provinces, under their proconsuls; the only difference being, that smooth-faced hypocrisy had been added to robbery, inasmuch as we had been plundered under the forms of law"

Captain Hillyar: "All this is new to me", replied the captain. "I thought that your war had arisen out of the slavery question".

Semmes: "That is the common mistake of foreigners. The enemy has taken pains to impress foreign nations with this false view of the case. With the exception of a few honest zealots, the canting hypocritical Yankee cares as little for our slaves as he does for our draught animals. The war which he has been making upon slavery for the last 40 years is only an interlude, or by-play, to help on the main action of the drama, which is Empire; and it is a curious coincidence that it was commenced about the time the North began to rob the South by means of its tariffs. When a burglar designs to enter a dwelling for the purpose of robbery, he provides himself with the necessary implements. The slavery question was one of the implements employed to help on the robbery of the South. It strengthened the Northern party, and enabled them to get their tariffs through Congress; and when at length, the South, driven to the wall, turned, as even the crushed worm will turn, it was cunningly perceived by the Northern men that 'No slavery' would be a popular war-cry, and hence, they used it.

It is true that we are defending our slave property, but we are defending it no more than any other species of our property - it is all endangered, under a general system of robbery. We are in fact, fighting for independence. The Union victory in 1865 destroyed the right of secession in America, which had been so cherished by America's founding fathers as the principle of their revolution. British historian and political philosopher Lord Acton, one of the most intellectual figures in Victorian England, understood the deeper meaning of Southern defeat. In a letter to former Confederate General Robert E. Lee dated November 4, 1866, Lord Acton wrote "I saw in States Rights the only available check upon the absolutism of the sovereign will, and secession filled me with hope, not as the destruction but as the redemption of Democracy. I deemed you were fighting the battles of our liberty, our progress, and our civilization and I mourn for that which was lost at Richmond more deeply than I rejoice over that which was saved at Waterloo (defeat of Napoleon). As Illinois Governor Richard Yates stated in a message to his state assembly on January 2, 1865, the war had "tended, more than any other event in the history of the country, to militate against the Jeffersonian Ideal (Thomas Jefferson) that the best government is that which governs least.

Years after the war former Confederate president Jefferson Davis stated "I Am saddened to Hear Southerners Apologize For Fighting To Preserve Our Inheritance". Some years later former U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt stated "Those Who Will Not Fight For The Graves Of Their Ancestors Are Beyond Redemption".

http://www.ircusa.com/scv/html/10_reasons.html