

# Reasons for Civil War were many and complex, but South had good reason to fight it

by Jeff Lovelace



The issue of slavery being the cause for the Civil War has always been a misguided fantasy. The “War of Northern Aggression” aptly reflects the true cause, and the revisionists who are unwilling to accept the truth should hold their delusory tongues forever.

Richard Humble’s “Illustrated History of the Civil War” put it best when he said, “The simplest answer is that there is no simple answer. The causes of the American Civil War were many and complex and spread out over a half a century. Indeed, there were probably as many causes of the war as there were men who marched off to fight it. ... One thing, though is clear. Popular mythology aside, the American Civil War was not fought as an impassioned crusade against slavery.”

Let’s go back to the Declaration of Independence and look at the substance of the last two paragraphs. Due to space limitations, the entire text cannot be quoted: “That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; ... and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.”

The Tenth Amendment in the Bill of Rights within the Constitution, goes even further to explain state sovereignty: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people...."

This gives us another appropriate title for the War of Northern Aggression, which is, The Second War of Independence.

If every home in the North had contained a copy of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the Northern propaganda war would have had little effect on its people. Industrialism ruled in the North, and newborn industries were raising an uproar for every type of protection and aid they could get from the federal government.

The North wanted safeguards from the lower priced European imports. The North was growing much faster than the South, and immigrants were pouring in by the tens of thousands. Northern finance and transportation was also booming.

In contrast, the South had much smaller towns for the most part and had maintained a much more static agrarian society.

Immigration was not a factor, and our industrial base grew very slowly. The South wanted the lower priced imports to join their ranks to do business in the South. Our annual crop of "King Cotton" netted a whopping \$190 million annually, around 57 percent of the total Gross National Product. The North was drooling at the prospect of getting a big slice of that pie.

The South believed that if Washington was ever controlled by the Yankees, the South would be ruined. The 1828 and 1832 legislation of a high-tariff law is but one example of the venom the South could be injected with by the Northern federal government.

Going back to 1824, the president of South Carolina College, Thomas Cooper, questioned, "Is it worthwhile to continue this Union of States, where the North demands to be our masters and we are required to be their tributaries?"

After Confederate President Jefferson Davis was inaugurated, he pointed out the American idea that "governments rest on the consent of the governed." He wished to avoid armed conflict, but held the position of the Southern nation to be sacred.

On March 6, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln refused to deal with the Confederate commissioners appointed by Davis. Their pleas for peaceful negotiation rather than armed conflict fell on deaf ears.

On April 29, 1861, Davis spoke to the Confederate Provisional Congress detailing the reasons for secession; "We protest solemnly in the face of mankind that we desire peace at any sacrifice save that of honor and independence."

After the bombardment of Fort Sumter, Lincoln called for 75,000 troops from the South, to in his words, "put down the rebellion." North Carolina Gov. Ellis answered Lincoln's call in his Boundary "Proclamation" speech by saying that this was a "high-handed act of tyrannical outrage... in violation of all constitutional law, in utter disregard of every sentiment of humanity and Christian civilization, and conceived in a spirit of aggression unparalleled by any act of recorded history."

My final quotation comes from the "New History of the Civil War" by Bruce Catton which says Yankee abolitionists desired a cringing insurrection, with "unlimited bloodshed and pillage from one end of the South to the other."

On my father's side alone, I have 10 ancestors who fought for the Confederacy. I am proud to say that none of these honorable men owned any slaves. They fought for North Carolina's right to Independence and to keep U.S. soldiers from marching on our beloved soil.

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