THE NATIONAL EXPERIENCE

PART TWO

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

SEVENTH EDITION

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A NOTE ON THE PAPERBOUND EDITION

This volume is part of a variant printing, not a new or revised edition, of *The National Experience,* Seventh Edition. Many of the users of the Sixth Edition found the two-volume paperbound version of that edition useful because it enabled them to fit the text into the particular patterns of their teaching and scheduling. The publishers have continued that format in preparing this printing, which exactly reproduces the text of the one-volume version of *The National Experience,* Seventh Edition. The first of these volumes begins with the discovery of America and continues through Reconstruction. The second volume, repeating the chapter on Reconstruction (Chapter 15), carries the account forward to the present day. The variant printing, then, is intended as a convenience to those instructors and students who have occasion to use either one part or the other of *The National Experience.* Consequently, the pagination and index of the one-volume version, as well as its illustrations, maps, and other related materials, are retained in the new printing. The difference between the one-volume and the two-volume versions of the book is a difference only in form.

PREFACE

Men and women make history. Their ideas and their hopes, their goals and contrivances for reaching those goals, shape all experience, past and present. The Indians, the first Americans, had to decide, by deliberation or by default, how to use the continent and its extraordinary resources. So have the successors of the Indians and the children of those successors—the early European settlers, the English colonists, the men and women of the new United States, and the generations that have followed them. Each generation has committed the nation to a complex of policies, some the product of thought and debate, others of habit or inadvertence, still others of calculated or undiscerning indifference. As the nation has grown, as its population has diversified, its economy matured, and its responsibilities multiplied, questions of national policy have become more difficult to understand but no more troubling. It took long thought and hard debate to settle the issues of independence, of democratic reform, of expansion, of slavery, of union itself, of control of private economic power, of resistance to totalitarianism across two oceans. All those issues and many more have made up the national experience.

This book endeavors to recount and explain that experience. It examines both the aspirations (often contradictory among themselves) and the achievements (often less grand than the best hopes) of the American people. It examines, too, the ideas, the institutions, and the processes that fed hope and affected achievement. It focuses on the decisions, positive and negative, that reflected national goals and directed national purposes, and consequently it focuses continually on the men and women who made those decisions, on those who made history. The book emphasizes public policy, but the history of public policy perforce demands continuing discussion of the whole culture that influenced it.

The authors of this book believe that a history emphasizing public policy, so conceived, reveals the fabric and experience of the past more completely than does any other kind of history. They believe, too, that an emphasis on questions of public policy provides the most useful introduction to the history of the United States. In the light of those convictions they have agreed on the focus of this book, on its organization, and on the selection and interpretation of the data it contains. The structure of the separate parts and chapters is now chronological, now topical, depending on the form that seemed most suitable for the explanation of the period or the subject under discussion. The increasing complexity of public issues in the recent past, moreover, has persuaded the authors to devote half of this volume to the period since Reconstruction, indeed more than a third to the twentieth century.

The authors have elected, furthermore, to confine their work to one volume so as to permit instructors to make generous supplementary assignments from the abundance of excellent monographs, biographies, and "problems" books now readily available. Just as there are clear interpretations of the past in those books, so are there in this, for the authors without exception find meaning in history and feel obliged to say what they see. The authors also believe that, especially for the beginning student of history, literature is better read than read about. Consequently, in commenting on belles-lettres and the other arts, they have consciously stressed those expressions and aspects of the arts relevant to an understanding of public policy. Finally, they have arranged to choose the illustrations and the boxed selections from contemporary and other sources in order to enhance and supplement not only the text but its particular focus.

This is a collaborative book in which each of the six contributors has ordinarily written about a period in which he is a specialist. Yet each has also executed the general purpose of the whole book. Each section of the book has been read and criticized by several of the contributors. This revision has profited from the assistance of many historians who were kind enough to review portions of the book before it was revised. These include Richard Bushman, University of Delaware; John P. Diggins, University of California, Irvine; Russell Duncan, University of Georgia; Laura Kalman, University of California, Santa Barbara; John J. McCusker, University of Maryland; Lawrence N. Powell, Tulane University; C. Peter Ripley, Florida State University; Joel H. Silbey, Cornell University; Betty Wallace, Austin Peay State University; and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, University of Florida.

Not even a collaboration as easy and agreeable as this one has been can erase the individuality of the collaborators. Each section of this book displays the particular intellectual and literary style of its contributor; all the contributors have been permitted, indeed urged, to remain themselves. The ultimate as well as the original responsibility for prose, for historical accuracy, and for interpretation remains that of the author of each section of this book: Edmund S. Morgan, Chapters 1–6; Kenneth M. Stampp, Chapters 7–12; William S. McFeely, Chapters 13–15; C. Vann Woodward, Chapters 16–21; John M. Blum, Chapters 22–26; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Chapters 27–29; revised for this edition by John M. Blum; and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Chapters 30–34, Epilogue.

JOHN M. BLUM, *Editor*
New Haven, Connecticut

A Note on the Suggestions for Reading

The lists of suggested readings that follow the chapters of this book are obviously and intentionally selective. They are obviously so because a reasonably complete bibliography of American history would fill a volume larger than this one. They are intentionally so because the authors of the various chapters have tried to suggest to students only those stimulating and useful works that they might profitably and enjoyably explore while studying this text. Consequently each list of suggested readings points to a relatively few significant and well-written books, and each list attempts to emphasize, in so far as possible, books available in inexpensive, paperback editions—books whose titles are marked by an asterisk.

Use of the suggested readings, then, permits a student to begin to range through the rich literature of American history, but interested and energetic students will want to go beyond the lists. They will profit from the bibliographies in many of the works listed. They should also consult the card catalogs in the libraries of their colleges and the invaluable bibliography in the *Harvard Guide to American History,* rev. ed. (Belknap). For critical comments about the titles they find, they should go on, when they can, to the reviews in such learned journals as the *American Historical Review,* the *Journal of American History,* the *Journal of Southern History,* and the *William and Mary Quarterly.*

Those students who want to acquire libraries of their own and who want also to economize by purchasing paperback editions will find the availability of titles in paperbacks at best uncertain. Every few months new titles are published and other titles go out of print. For the most recent information about paperbacks, students should consult *Paperbound Books in Print* (Bowker), which appears biannually.

The reading lists refer to very few articles, not because articles are unimportant, but because they are often rather inaccessible to undergraduates. There are, however, many useful collections of important selected articles, often available in inexpensive editions. So, too, students will have no difficulty in finding collections of contemporary historical documents that add depth and excitement to the study of history. A growing number of thoughtful books organize both contemporary and scholarly materials in units designed to facilitate the investigation of historical problems.

The problems books, documents books, and collections of articles will whet the appetite of engaged students for further reading in the fields of their interest. They can serve in their way, then, as can the lists of suggested readings in this volume, as avenues leading to the adventures of the mind and the development of the understanding that American history affords.

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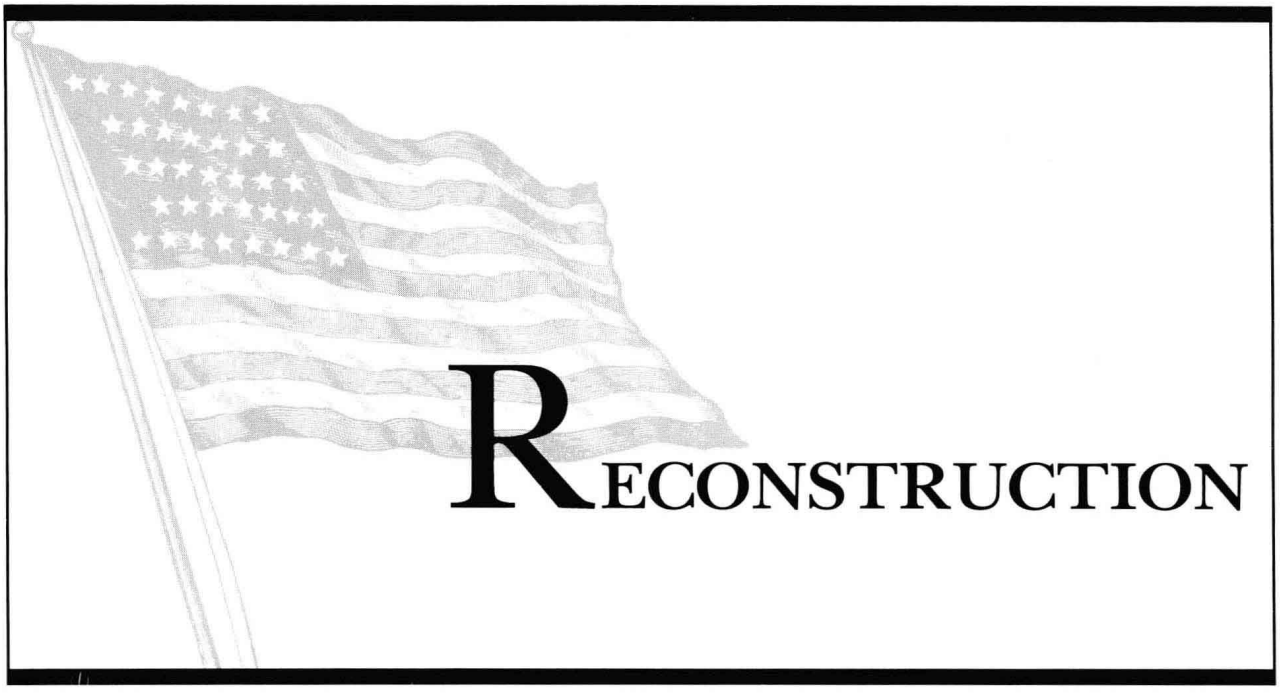

RECONSTRUCTION

The American Revolution brought great and, in some cases, uniquely American political changes with the birth of a new nation. The Second American Revolution, as the Civil War has been called, forced a country aged by battle to confront one of the most ancient themes of world history, slavery and emancipation. Slavery had existed for as long as history had been written, and now, the American republic experienced, as older societies had, the dramatic shift of a portion of its population from a rigidly enforced legal servitude into an as yet undefined condition of freedom. Intense argument and dramatic political action characterized the Era of Reconstruction, the period after the Civil War when some determined Americans struggled to restructure society in order to give meaning to the freedom that the former slaves had achieved.

Proud optimists thought that simply ending slavery was all there was to the job. They did not realize that the freed people would have to struggle to find their next meal in a society that often was anything but welcoming. Despite this uncertain beginning, the former slaves made their way into the economy and achieved a remarkable entry into the body politic as well. But initial optimism yielded to pessimism and shame as these ambitious hopes were cruelly rebuffed. The American people's outraged sense of fairness was unmatched by actions sufficient to end the mistreatment of the black former slaves during Reconstruction and long afterwards.

Yet, if freedmen were slowed in the pursuit of a chance to share equally in the lean rewards of an impoverished South, no one could take away the fact that when the Civil War was over 4,000,000 Americans who had been slaves were slaves no longer. They were a freed people—a free people—and, by their very presence, they said to their country that they had to be taken into account in a new way. The nation would have to reconstruct itself to adjust to their emancipation.

ANDREW JOHNSON AND RECONSTRUCTION

"Malice Toward None" In March 1865, as the war was ending, Abraham Lincoln, in his second inaugural address, had committed the nation to a peace in which the victors would bear "malice toward none." This magnificent phrase carried a promise of forgiveness of former slaveholders in the South, but implied reliance on their benevolence to provide for the welfare of their former slaves. A bit uneasily, the President was also mindful of the claims of the freedmen to something more than economic dependence on their former masters. Conferring with highly educated, free-born black leaders from New Orleans, he contemplated the possibility of a suffrage, limited by literacy or property ownership, that would give strength to a leadership group among the black citizens.

He was groping towards a Reconstruction policy, and so was the Congress (see pp. 360–62).

On March 3, 1865, the Congress adjourned according to its usual schedule, which meant the legislators were to be out of Washington all through the crucial spring, summer, and fall that followed the war. On their last day in Washington, the lawmakers, with the President's approval, established the Freedman's Savings Bank, an interstate federally sponsored private bank in which the freedmen were urged to put their savings as they sold crops or earned wages. The legislators and the President also created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands — a welfare agency, soon known as the Freedmen's Bureau — which was to provide relief supplies and transportation for Union war refugees, black and white, serve as a labor referral and arbitration service, and provide a local court system. The agents were also directed to divide lands abandoned to the United States Army into 40-acre lots and distribute them to freedmen families. The drafters of the legislation expected that the land would be farmed after the manner of the Port Royal experiment of the Sea Islands (see p. 327). Lincoln, having signed the bills, appointed a well-meaning and devout Christian, General O. O. Howard, to head the Freedmen's Bureau.

With Lincoln's assassination, all eyes turned to the new President, Andrew Johnson, to see what his Reconstruction policies would be. Radicals hoped that his stern wartime attitude toward slaveholding planters in his home state of Tennessee would herald a policy favorable to the freedmen. Shrewder friends of the retention of white supremacy in the South guessed, correctly, that the insecure new President would respond well to the flattering proposition that he could come to be thought of as the great President who reunited the Union. They proposed that he should do so by restoring a social structure not unlike the one that had existed before the war.

Born to poverty in North Carolina, Johnson was apprenticed to a tailor and, at 18, moved to Greenville in mountainous eastern Tennessee to practice his skilled trade. His wife, Eliza McCardle, taught him to write and Johnson, a good Jacksonian, joined volunteer associations, including a debating club, and became an active citizen in the small city. He entered politics and, before the war, served not only in the Tennessee legislature and as governor, but also in both houses of Congress. Having risen from indentured servitude, Johnson was an example of the advancement possible in a society that opened opportunities to even its poorest members. At the Civil War's end, he had a unique opportunity to extend at least some of these possibilities to another group of poor Americans, the freed slaves, but, escaping the greatness within his grasp, Johnson could not bring himself to identify his own position with theirs.

Northern advocates of black rights had misunderstood the President's policies as wartime governor of Tennessee. When he had ruled in favor of the former slaves rather than their former masters, he did so not so much to assist impoverished freedman as to punish rich planters, who had long considered themselves superior to men like him. In a pathetic, but moving, drunken inaugural speech when he was sworn in as vice president in March 1865, Johnson exposed not only his awareness of the realities of social and economic injustice but also his lack of confidence. When he became President, powerful members of the very class he had feared and despised, seized the opportunity. With flattery and, even more, with appeals to his staunch support for the Union and to his determination to be thought to be a responsible President, they encouraged him to follow a policy that would sustain black subordination in the South. Shrewdly aware of how thin the commitment to black equality was in the North, Johnson thought he had a formula for a new political alignment and for reelection to the presidency.

On May 29, 1865, Johnson issued two proclamations. The first granted amnesty to former Confederates who would take an oath of loyalty to the Constitution and the federal laws. Their property was to be restored to them, except for slaves and any lands and goods that were already in the process of being confiscated by federal authorities. Fourteen classes of persons were excepted from the general amnesty, including the highest-ranking civil and military officers of the Confederacy, all those who had deserted judicial posts or seats in Congress to serve the Confederacy, and persons whose taxable property was worth more than $20,000. To regain their rights, men in these categories were required to make individual applications for amnesty directly to the President. The former leaders of the South would be applying to him in order to regain the chance to once again be its leaders. With the pardons granted, Johnson would have the most powerful voices in the South indebted to him politically.

The second proclamation, in which Johnson outlined his requirements for the reconstruction of North Carolina, foreshadowed the policy he would follow in future proclamations to other states. He appointed William W. Holden, an announced Unionist, as provisional governor and directed him to call a convention for the purpose of amending the state constitution "to restore said State to its constitutional relations to the Federal government." He also accepted the governments already established in Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia which had been brought back into the Union under Lincoln's plan.

In addition to these formal proclamations and programs of political restoration of the South, Andrew Johnson gave informal instructions that not just political rights but lands abandoned to Union armies were also to be given back to Confederates. A few Freedmen's Bureau agents and a good many black farmers protested this abrogation of the will of Congress expressed in the legislation creating the Freedmen's Bureau. On the Georgia coast, black Bureau agent Tunis Campbell refused to allow

***Prisoners from the Front*, 1866, by Winslow Homer**

lands to be taken from black farmers; only Johnson's federal troops forced him to do so. Such protests were of little avail; by the end of the year almost all of the acreage that the freedmen thought would be distributed to them was returned to Confederate planters.

The easy terms that Johnson set for the restoration of Southern states bothered many Northerners. Governor B. F. Perry of South Carolina forwarded every pardon petition he recieved and President Johnson responded with almost equal generosity. Often reluctant secessionists, many he pardoned turned up as duly elected congressmen and officers of the restored state governments. Others, knowing Johnson would grant their pardons, did not wait for them before being elected to office. A Confederate general, Benjamin G. Humphreys, was governor of Mississippi and the former vice president of the Confederacy, Alexander H. Stephens, was elected senator from Georgia. The persisting loyalty of the Southern voters to their former leaders alarmed the North and the freed people of the South.

There were other signs of white Southern obstinacy. Some states refused to repudiate the Confederate war debt, and South Carolina merely "repealed" its ordinance of secession, thus refusing to admit that rebelling had been unconstitutional. Mississippi would not ratify the proposed Thirteenth Amendment, formally ending slavery. Southern Unionists and freedmen complained that they were not safe under the Johnson state governments; in late summer of 1865 Governor Holden warned the President that there was "much of a rebellion spirit" left in North Carolina. He feared that Johnson's "leniency" had "emboldened" the enemies of the government. Privately Johnson counseled Southern leaders to avoid antagonizing Congress, but he was too stubborn to modify his plan or even to alter his pardoning policy.

Only after a public outcry against the leniency of his terms did Johnson require the returning states to disavow their ordinances of secession, repudiate the Southern war debt, and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. That amendment, which would end slavery forever in the United States, had cleared Congress in January 1865, but had required the approval of at least some of the former Confederate states to reach ratification by three-fourths of the states. The agreement that slavery must end seemed only grudgingly forthcoming.

The Defeated South Agriculture, the South's economic bulwark, had been battered wherever armies had clashed and passed. Houses and outbuildings had been burned, crops destroyed, and livestock killed. Seed to plant new crops was often unavailable, and many farmers