# Civil war

The American Civil was one of the most important pages in the history of American nation. Civil war is the conflict which took place in 1861–65 between the Northern states (the Union) and the Southern states that seceded from the Union and formed the Confederacy. Following the other historical interpretation this war is known as War between the States which is also called the War of the Rebellion, the War of Secession, and the War for Southern Independence.

The causes of the war were a complex series of events, including slavery. Competing nationalisms, political turmoil, the definition of freedom, the preservation of the Union, the fate of slavery and the structure of the society and economy could all be listed as significant contributing factors in America's bloodiest conflict. By 1861 the differences between the Northern States and the Southern States had become so great that compromise would no longer work. Thus, a conflict started within the nation.

 The social priorities were supported by economic development of the North which always plays a major role considered as the main indicator of future success or failure of a country. The victory of the North was supported by better banking, factories and ships, more railroads to move supplies, men and equipment, larger Navy, experienced government, larger population. Southern slaves, a large part of the population, were clearly no help, as well as weak industry and factory production.

During the early period of the war, Lincoln, to hold together his war coalition of Republicans and War Democrats, emphasized preservation of the Union as the sole Union objective of the war, but with the Emancipation proclamation announced in September 1862 and put into effect four months later, Lincoln adopted the abolition of slavery as a second mission. The Emancipation Proclamation declared all slaves held in territory then under Confederate control to be "then, thenceforth, and forever free." (Robertson, 34).

This was an important political step closely connected with military benefits. Namely, Emancipation Proclamation was one of those minor reasons given the North new chances to win the war. Emancipation, eventually led blacks joining the Northern army, renewed the army forces, and allowed Lincoln planned new aggressive military campaigns taking into account renew front-line forces.

The North developed a special strategic plan to achieve several goals. First, control of the Mississippi River was secured to allow unimpeded movement of needed Western goods. Second, the South was cut off from international traders and smugglers that could aid the Southern war effort. Third, the Confederate army was incapacitated to prevent further northward attacks such as that at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and to ease the battle losses of the North. Fourth, the South's ability to produce needed goods and war materials was curtailed.

It was these measures that the South had to counter with their own plans to capitalize on early victories that weakened the Northern resolve to fight, to attain international recognition as a sovereign state, and to keep Union forces from seizing Confederate territory. The South ultimately did not achieve its goals, and after four years of fighting the North won the war. The divisive, destructive conflict cast a shadow on the successes of the United States during the 19th century, however. During the war the strategy of the North government was not successful all the time, but strategic thinking and charisma of Lincoln played a major role in the war outcome.

 In August 1864, the radical turn fastened the win of the North. Union General Sherman departed Chattanooga, and was soon met by Confederate General Joseph Johnston. Skillful strategy enabled Johnston to hold off Sherman's force, almost twice the size of Johnston's. The fall of Atlanta was another reason increased the chances of the North to win and boosted its morale. The strategy of the Lincoln administration made the capital safe from attack by ringing the city with a chain of forts manned by substantial garrisons of artillerists and other troops. Remaining Confederate troops were defeated between the end of April and the end of May. Jefferson Davis was captured in Georgia on May 10.Some historians suppose that “No one will ever know if the course of the Civil War would have been changed if General Lee had seized the better ground at Gettysburg or if the Virginia had broken the Union blockade at Hampton Roads” (Rose).

The difficult situation in the South at the beginning of 1865 rose the North chances to end the war in a short time. Transportation problems and successful blockades caused severe shortages of food and supplies in the South. Starving soldiers began to desert Lee's forces, and although President Jefferson Davis approved the arming of slaves as a means of augmenting the shrinking army, the measure was never put into effect. Nevertheless, there are different interpretations of the war events and strategy adopted by the North and the South. Henry Adams wrote that: “I think that Lee should have been hanged. It was all the worse that he was a good man and a fine character and acted conscientiously. It's always the good men who do the most harm in the world” (Bartholomae, Petrosky, 54). The factors that enter into the South's ultimate defeat are those things that historians repeat time and time again, and with a great amount of validity: the North's industrial base; the North's manpower resources; the fact that foreign recognition was denied the Confederacy. In time these things would tell on the battlefield, certainly on the broader level.

It is possible to conclude that Civil War played an important role in creation of a nation. How exactly independence was physically achieved was not as important as the fact that it had already, and would always be, achieved in the minds of Americans. It became clear that some modifications of the national ideology would have to be made because te understanding of rights and freedom had been changed. In general, Civil war was a landmark, which brought people together and created one American nation.

## References

Bartholomae, D., Petrosky, A. Ways of Reading. An anthology for Writers (7th edition), 2005, pp. 27-57.

Robertson, James I., Jr. Civil War. America Become One Nation. New York: Knopf, 1992, pp. 4-46.

Rose P. K. The Civil War: Black American Contributions to Union Intelligence. 2000.