**Lincoln`s View on Slavery**

The fight for freedom for the Negros has not been easy, especially in the New World (America). The United States had been the destination for enslaved people for centuries before its independence. Slaves were used in firms and houses as a source of cheap labor for the growing industries. Slavery, however, has not been accepted by all whites. The founding fathers, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, considered this practice against humanity. In the mid-19th century, there was a growing need to abolish Slavery. This need was more vital as the United States was expanding westwards. Abraham Lincoln stood out as the leader with the will and determination to bring Slavery to an end. Due to its antihumanitarian aspects and despite its benefits to the Southern agricultural States, Lincoln positively changed the situation with Slavery.

**Lincoln’s Tough Stance on Slaves and the Civil War**

Before being the president, Abraham Lincoln had always believed that Slavery had no place in the United States. However, such a view was limited by the fact that the U.S. Constitution had provisions that seemed to give room for the institution of Slavery. For instance, the fugitive slave clause and the three-fifths clause seemed to support the practice. The 1850s was, nevertheless, a turning point in the history and the course of Slavery in the United States. With the inclusion of Texas into the Union, the Missouri compromise, and the annexation of California, there would be an imbalance between enslaved persons and free states in the Union. According to Hesling (2015), Lincoln supported the need to limit the expansion of Slavery above the 36º 30’ latitude. He, however, did not know how to deal with the menace bearing that it had constitutional backing.

Lincoln’s popularity made anti-slavery sentiments more popular and acceptable among many legislators. While campaigning for the 1858 U.S. Senate election, Lincoln argued with his opponent Stephen Douglas, who had accused him of supporting “black equality.” Lincoln emerged as an authoritative orator and gained public support. Even though he did not win the seat, his open views on Slavery convinced many of the need to abolish Slavery. As a result, anti-slave movements gained momentum across the country. Anti-slavery sentiments were further fueled by the landmark decision in Dred Scott v. Sandford (National Park Service, 2021). The Supreme Court decisions gave the green light or Slavery to be continued even in the Northern States since slaves were considered property that could be moved from one place to another without restriction. Lincoln’s popularity and public sentiment changed the curse of Slavery towards freedom.

The American Civil War was due to Lincoln’s efforts to curtail the spread of Savery. The rural southern states were pro-slavery due to the benefits they gained from it. With the election of anti-slavery Lincoln as the U.S. president, southern States felt threatened and decided to secede from the Union. South Caroline, for instance, left the Union before Lincoln’s Inauguration (Ayers, 2005). Lincoln determined to protect the Union, using military action against such States leading to the Civil War. The Civil War was a critical moment in U.S. history. With the fate of the Union hanging in the balance, Lincoln used tactical means to win some of the Southern States back to the Union. Therefore, Lincoln’s stand and belief against Slavery triggered the American Civil War.

**Emancipation and the Constitution**

General Robbert Lee won some decisive battles against the Union army as the Civil War progressed. This event threatened the existence of the Union. To bring more soldiers to the Union’s front, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all enslaved people in the States fighting the Union (Paulsen, 2005). Many blacks flock to fight beside the Union against the Confederate Army. The inclusion of the blacks was strategically important as they not only engaged the Confederacy forces but gave a moral bust to the Union Soldiers. The Union ultimately won the war, and the Union was preserved. Even though it began as a measure to protect the Union, Lincoln used the Civil War to free slaves in the Confederacy territories.

At the end of the Civil War, the Union government under Lincoln outlined the steps for the re-admission into the Union of those States which seceded. Some of these requirements were ratifying the 13th Amendment (which abolished slave labor except as a punishment for a crime) and ratifying the 14th Amendment, which granted blacks equal protection under the law (Curtis, 2007). Similarly, the Southern States were to draft new constitutions granting black men the right to vote. All these were the efforts of Lincoln to see an end to Slavery.

 **Conclusion**

Amidst all the odds, Lincoln guided the nation in its lowest moment, a crisis that would have torn the country apart. Furthermore, Lincoln’s leadership proved to be useful in such a time. He solved the problem that the founding fathers left to be solved by later generations. In his tenures as the president of the United States, his major contributions included the abolition of Slavery by law. He positively changed the situation and the course of Slavery in the United States. Again, through the Civil War, Lincoln established a strong executive, which was necessary during such hard times in U.S. history. Lincoln was indeed the great emancipator.

# **References**

Ayers, E. L. (2005). What Caused the Civil War? *North & South: The Official Magazine of the Civil War Society, 8*(5), 12.

Curtis, M. (2007). The fourteenth Amendment: recalling what the court forgot. *Drake L. Rev, 56*, 911.

Hesling, W. (2015). Lincoln: a man for too many seasons? *Rethinking History, 19*(3), 506-511.

National Park Service. (2021, May 14). *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War.* https://www.nps.gov/cuga/learn/historyculture/upload/SLAVERY-BROCHURE.pdf

Paulsen, M. S. (2005). The Emancipation Proclamation and the Commander in Chief Power. *Ga. L. Rev., 40*, 807.