



DIVIDED LOYALTIES

States, citizens faced tough choices as Civil War loomed

By Jason Navarro, Educator, Wheaton High School, Wheaton, Mo.

PRIMARY SOURCE

Reactions to the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter varied greatly based on location. However, the attack consistently provoked strong feelings in Americans who heard about it. Here are two examples.

“Great excitement among the people. More soldiers ordered to Charleston. In the evening heard the cars whistling and supposing there something of importance to be heard, I started to the village. While on the road I heard the cannon firing & hurried on to learn what it all meant. When I got to the village I found it alive with people and was told that Fort Sumter was taken... This notorious little battle will have a tendency to bring out the other states, and show the Black Republicans that the South will fight.”

– David G. Harris
South Carolina farmer

“Here begins the chapter of my journal, entitled WAR... This morning’s papers confirmed last night’s news... that the rebels opened fire at Sumter yesterday morning.... So Civil War is inaugurated at last. God defend the Right. The Northern backbone is much stiffened already. Many who stood up for “Southern rights” and complained of wrongs done the South now say that since the South has fired the first gun, they are ready to go all lengths in supporting the government.”

– George Templeton Strong
New York Lawyer

VOCABULARY

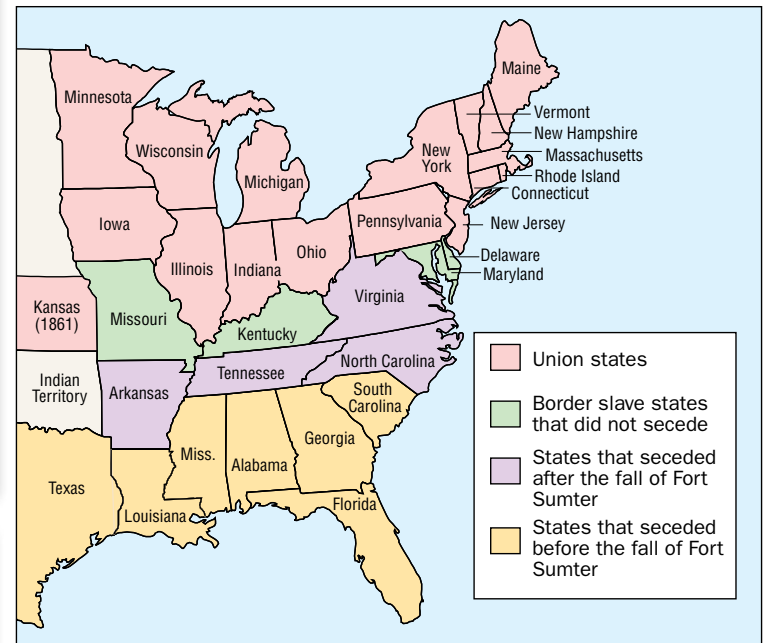
Place the letter of the vocabulary word on the line next to its definition. Write a sentence using each word.

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|---|
| A. Fireaters | _____ | 1. Something of the utmost importance; more important than other considerations |
| B. Intact | _____ | 2. Not supporting or assisting either side in a conflict |
| C. Sympathizers | _____ | 3. To take away someone’s property as a penalty |
| D. Coerce | _____ | 4. A law-making body |
| E. Precarious | _____ | 5. To convince by intimidation or force |
| F. Legislature | _____ | 6. Those who share the opinions of another group |
| G. Ordinance | _____ | 7. Troops stationed in a town or fort to defend it |
| H. Confiscate | _____ | 8. An order of law |
| I. Secede | _____ | 9. Complete or whole; undamaged |
| J. Garrison | _____ | 10. To formally withdraw from an organization |
| K. Neutral | _____ | 11. Radicals who wanted their states to leave the union |
| L. Priority | _____ | 11. Unstable or insecure; dangerous |

Critical Thinking

1. Why did many of the slave states secede when Abraham Lincoln was elected president?
2. In the primary source, David Harris referred to Lincoln’s party, the Republicans, as the “Black Republicans.” What do you think he meant by that?
3. For many states, it was an obvious choice whether to remain in the Union or join the Confederacy. Missouri, however, was different, and it took several battles before Missouri was secured for the Union. Why was this so? How was Missouri different from other states at the outbreak of the Civil War? Discuss as a class.

THE PROGRESS OF SECESSION



WORD ASSOCIATIONS

There are many different words used to refer to the opposing sides of the Civil War. Read the words from the word bank. On the lines provided, write the words that are most closely associated with “North” and “South.”

Federal Rebels United States Confederacy Union Yankees Fireaters	North	South
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

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