

Reforms After Grant's Election



1.

The Election of 1868

Republicans nominated war hero **General Ulysses S. Grant**, even though Grant had no political experience.

The votes of 500,000 blacks helped elect Grant.

If Republicans hoped to keep control of the White House in future elections, the voting rights of the Freedmen needed federal protection.

2.

Fifteenth Amendment

The Republican controlled Congress acted quickly in 1869 to secure the vote for African-Americans.

Adding one more amendment to those already adopted (**the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 and the 14th Amendment in 1868**), Congress passed the **15th Amendment, which prohibited any state from denying or abridging a citizen's right to vote "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."** It was ratified in 1870.

Reconstruction in the South

1. Overview:

The Republican party dominated the governments of the ex-Confederate states.

Beginning in 1867, each Republican-controlled government was under the **military protection of the US army.**

When satisfied that a state had met all Congressional reconstruction requirements, troops were withdrawn.

2. Reconstruction Governments in the South:

In every Republican state government in the South except one, whites were in the majority in the legislatures.

Republican legislators included **native-born white Southerners, freedmen** and recently-arrived **Northerners.**

- **“Scalawags” and “Carpetbaggers”**

Some leaders were Northerners who came south, called **carpetbaggers.** Northerners went South after the war for various reasons. Some were investors interested in setting up new businesses, while others were ministers and teachers with humanitarian goals. Some went simply to plunder.

Other leaders were Southern whites who had opposed the Confederacy in the Civil War. They were called **scalawags.**

- **African-American Legislators**



A third group of leaders was made up of **freedmen**, who could vote and hold office during Reconstruction.

During the Reconstruction Era, Republicans in the South sent two African-Americans to the Senate and more than a dozen African-Americans to the House of Representatives.

Seeing African-Americans and former slaves in positions of power caused bitter resentment among ex-Confederates who could not hold office.

3. Accomplishments:

Creation of new schools for blacks and whites
Rebuilding of roads and railroads
Passage of laws banning racial discrimination

Criticisms:

dishonest leaders attempted to take government funds;
wasted money on unnecessary programs

Questions:

Grant was elected as a war hero. Can you think of any other presidents who were war heroes? Why do you think war heroes are often chosen by political parties to run for office?

If each Republican controlled government in the South was protected by the US army, how do you think white southerners viewed these governments?

Teachers came down from the North to help set up schools for blacks and schools for whites. Later, in the 1960s, young adults would come down from the North to participate in civil rights protests and help register voters. Are there ways young people today show idealism and humanitarian concerns?

Why do you think churches became an important part of the African-American community? What did churches provide?