

Ready to Die for Their Cause

When Abraham Lincoln was elected president, South Carolina voted to secede from the **Union**. Six more states left soon after. In the end eleven states seceded from the United States. They then formed the Confederate States of America. But did they have the right to do so?

People in the South thought they did. The government of “their” nation had passed laws and acted in ways that hurt them. Now there was an anti-slavery president! They believed slavery would be outlawed next. They did not want the slaves who worked on farms and plantations freed. Just as the Founding Fathers broke away from England, people in the South thought they had the right to do the same. They felt so strongly about this that they were willing to die to win their “independence.”

The president and Congress did not see the South’s actions in the same way. Their point was that the states had formed a union (the United States). They saw it as a union that could not be broken unless all states agreed. Also, there was real concern that the young country could not survive as two smaller ones. It would be too weak. As Lincoln is often quoted as saying, “A house divided cannot stand.” Those in the North felt so strongly about this, they were willing to die for their cause.

The “Union” in the first sentence is the same as

- A. South Carolina.
- B. six southern states.
- C. the United States.
- D. Confederate States of America.

Based on the reading, the North and South went to war over

- A. the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln.
- B. whether the South had the right to secede.
- C. the right to their independence from England.
- D. how strong the United States was in the world.

In your own words, explain how each side saw the issue:

South -

North -

Which sentence does **NOT** give a cause of the Civil War?

- A. Abraham Lincoln was elected president.
- B. They formed the Confederate States of America.
- C. People in the South believed slavery would be outlawed.
- D. Lincoln is often quoted saying, “A house divided cannot stand.”