

## **Ch 12 Section 3 The Collapse of Reconstruction**

### **Opposition to Reconstruction**

#### **Ku Klux Klan**

- **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**—Confederate veterans group that turns terrorist
- Grows rapidly; aims to restore white supremacy

#### **Anti-Black Violence**

- 1868–1871 Klan, others kill thousands, burn schools, churches, homes
- Klan works to force Republican state governments out of power
- Southern Democrats use violence to intimidate black voters
- White Democratic candidates win state elections in 1875, 1876

#### **Economic Pressure**

- Black landowners, non-farmers attacked, have property destroyed
- Need forces freedmen into wage labor, sharecropping for whites

#### **Legislative Response**

- 1870, 1871 Enforcement Acts passed to curtail Klan, Democrats
  - Supreme Court rules 1871 act unconstitutional
- Klan violence decreases because restore white supremacy in South

#### **Shifts in Political Power**

- 1872 Amnesty Act returns voting rights to many former Confederates
- Congress allows Freedmen's Bureau to expire

#### **Scandals and Money Crises Hurt Republicans**

##### **Fraud and Bribery**

- Grant considered honest; appoints friends to political office
- Beginning in 1872, series of Grant administration scandals exposed

##### **Republican Unity Shattered**

- 1872, Liberal Republican Party forms, nominates Horace Greeley a *New York Tribune* editor
- Democrats also nominate Greeley; Grant wins by wide margin
- Liberal Republicans weaken Radicals, make Reconstruction difficult

##### **Continued Scandal**

- Administration corruption continues; Grant does not seek reelection

##### **Economic Turmoil**

##### **The Panic of 1873**

- Business opportunities in South lead investors to excessive debt
  - Largest government securities dealer bankrupts, starts **panic of 1873**
  - banks, businesses close; stock market collapses
- Panic triggers 5-year economic depression

##### **Currency Dispute**

- Panic of 1873 fuels dispute over currency
  - financial experts want return to gold standard
  - South, West want more greenbacks to pay debts
- 1875, Specie Resumption Act puts country back on gold standard

##### **Judicial and Popular Support Fades**

##### **Supreme Court Decisions**

- 1870s Supreme Court decisions undermine 14th, 15th Amendments
- Federal government loses power to protect African-American rights

### **Northern Support Fades**

- Northerners grow indifferent to events in South:
  - shift attention to national problems
  - want reconciliation between regions
  - begin to dislike Reconstruction policies
- Republicans give up from lack of judicial, public support, leaders
- Republicans conclude government cannot impose moral, social changes

### **Democrats “Redeem” the South**

#### **Democrats Recapture the South**

- **Redemption**—return of Democrats to power in the South, 1869–1875

#### **Election of 1876**

- Republicans nominate Governor **Rutherford B. Hayes**, not Grant
- Democrats choose Governor **Samuel J. Tilden**
- Tilden wins popular vote, 1 shy of electoral; 20 electoral disputed
- **Compromise of 1877**—Hayes gets presidency through deal between party leaders, Democrats get:
  - federal troops leave LA, SC
  - funding for Southern railroad, waterways
  - conservative Southerner in cabinet
- Compromise means end of Reconstruction

#### **Home Rule in the South**

- After Hayes removes federal troops, Democrats take over states
- **Home rule**—running state government without federal intervention

#### **Legacy of Reconstruction**

- Republicans fail to protect rights they gave to former slaves
- Unwillingness to distribute land blocks economic independence
- Amendments abolish slavery, give basis for civil rights legislation
- African-American schools, civic groups increase literacy, opportunity