

Reconstruction Simulation

You are the victorious union government and are now faced with the task of bringing order to the former Confederate States of America. Due to the civil war their economy is in ruins, there is a decent size of the population that resents your presence and still wishes the war was being fought. Along with this there is a big population that now has its freedom (something many have never known) but don't know the first thing about life outside of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation made them free men but that was it. And finally there is a segment of society in the South that believes that by cooperating with you eventually life will return to what it was before the Civil War.

Clearly you have a daunting task before you. How do you make sure that those hostile to your presence do not become lawless marauding resistance fighters? How do you ensure the freedom of former slaves and prepare them to be productive members of society lest they be returned to slavery because they cannot deal with their independence? Finally, how do you show those who think that life will return to what it was before the civil war that you mean business and that their racist values and beliefs will never be represented in government?

In groups of three to four you are to jot down how you would go about reconstructing the southern states after the civil war. There is no easy 5 minute answer to this dilemma and be prepared for discussion with your group mates because not everybody thinks like everybody else. You are going to have to come up with answers to the problems that are spelled out in the situation above but there are also tasks here that can be found if you read between the lines. You will need to identify these and address them as well. Good luck and you will have 20 minutes to draft your answers. Remember that if you have any questions just ask me for some guidance.