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by B J

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Issues Confronting America in the 1850s

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Issues Confronting America in the 1850s

The election of Abraham Lincoln fanned the flames of southern secession, but it did not start the turmoil witnessed in the 1850s. The nation's differences had been deepening for centuries before Lincoln was elected. Both the North and South used harsh rhetoric and provocation, and angry sentiments filled both sides. Enslavement was a matter that divided the North and the South for a long time. According to Lynn (2019), the Compromise of 1850 was supposed to bring the North and South together on slavery, but it simply created new challenges. Many northerners were outraged because it empowered slave owners to chase escaped slaves into northern territories and bring them back to slavery (Lynn, 2019). The Compromise's adoption angered Southerners since they did not need another non-slave domain to join the Union. They believed it would further erode their legislative authority while providing little tangible safety for servitude in the colonies or at home.

Though modest but loud, the abolitionist campaign added to the strained relations between the North and the South. Reformers, inspired by reporter and activist William Lloyd Garrison, had been calling for abolishing slavery since the 1830s. For decades, abolitionists, a small minority within the resistance movement, had a substantial influence on Americans by raising awareness of the ills of enslavement. More radical abolitionists, like John Brown, had called for violence in their attempts to abolish slavery by the 1850s. Furthermore, Abolitionism was considered a threat to the affluent Southern states' lifestyle, and they attacked the Northern states ideologically when the opportunity arose (Lynn, 2019). Abraham Lincoln, a Republican who believed in the Union and not the state's liberties to choose their practices bordering on slavery, taxes, among others, was elected into office in 1860. The southern states found it problematic to accept Lincoln's presidency, and seven states seceded from the United States of

America. They include Alabama, Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, and Louisiana (Lynn, 2019). The Confederate was a revolt that needed to be taken back into the national government, which President Lincoln understood, marking the American Civil war.

According to a survey conducted in 2018, 31% of Americans believe that America will experience a second civil war in the coming years (Boston University Today, 2019). Although Donald Trump's election resulted from the nation's democratic fragmentation, he extended it further than before he came into power. His actions in the final weeks of his presidency, particularly his refusal of his defeat in the 2020 presidential election and provocation to insurgency towards Congress' formal recognition of electoral ballots on the 6th of January 2021, pushed the country to a tipping point. Unlike in the 1850s, when slavery united the country's states, there is no social force to bring the citizens together. Americans are divided by their news and popular cultural preferences. Although America is still the most religious country in the industrialized regions, its elites dwell in one set of codes, whereas most conventional adherents live in another. More Democrats are becoming Democrats since they despise Republicans and vice versa. Also, the increasing cases of domestic terrorism and the increase in cases of gun violence in the country are indicators of an impending civil war. With the support of rising extremism and online disinformation, America's ongoing racial turmoil could devolve into asymmetric or unconventional conflict.

To sum it up, Americans must at some stage reclaim their faith in Social democracy by confronting the realities of many divisive ethnic, ideological, and spiritual concerns. Distinct political differences in the nation and a bias for the fiery and aggressive political activity must be addressed. Inability to identify a political compromise, especially at the central level, where the presidency serves as a symbol of national unity, might lead to instability and civil war, especially

when the citizens are divided. More importantly, a more assertive generation of politicians and bureaucrats is desperately needed in America.

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