

**November  
1861**  
*The Trent affair*

**April  
1862**  
*Confederate draft  
law passed*

**July  
1862**  
*Pacific  
Railroad Act*

**July  
1862**  
*Internal  
Revenue Act*

**January  
1863**  
*Emancipation  
Proclamation  
takes effect*

**1861**

**1862**

**1863**

## 2 Life Behind the Lines

### SECTION PREVIEW

#### Objectives

- 1 Compare the effects of wartime politics on the Confederate and Union governments.
- 2 Describe the Emancipation Proclamation and its effects especially on African Americans.
- 3 List the hardships that befell the North and the South during the war.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: draft; recognition; greenback; martial law; Copperhead; writ of *habeas corpus*; Emancipation Proclamation; contraband.

#### Main Idea

The Union and Confederate governments struggled to support their armies and care for their citizens. The Union government also moved to abolish slavery.

#### Reading Strategy

**Problem Solving** List some possible solutions to the problems that the Union and Confederate governments faced during the war. As you read, take specific notes on how both sides actually responded.

In early 1862 the South faced a crisis. As Grant moved toward Mississippi and McClellan's army threatened Richmond, many Confederate soldiers neared the end of their enlistments. Few seemed ready to reenlist. "If I live this twelve months out, I intend to try mighty hard to keep out [of the army]," pledged one Virginia soldier.

### Politics in the South

The branches and powers of the Confederate government were similar to those of the government of the United States. However, the framers of the Confederate constitution made certain that it recognized states' rights and slavery. These two differences caused difficulties for the South throughout the war.

Like the government of the North, the Confederate government had to persuade individual citizens to sacrifice their personal interests for the common good. Confederate leaders had to find a way to build Southerners' loyalty to their new government. Furthermore, because the South had fewer resources than

the North, its war effort depended more on making the best possible use of what it had. Since the southern state governments were strong and sometimes fiercely independent, meeting these objectives would prove difficult.

**Mobilizing for War** Fearing the war would be lost if there were not enough soldiers to fight, General Lee called for a **draft**, or required military service. Opponents of strong central government claimed that the proposal violated the principles the South was fighting for. One Texas senator disagreed with such arguments:

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"Cease this child's play. . . . The enemy are in some portions of almost every state in the Confederacy. . . . We need a large army. How are you going to get it? . . . No man has any individual rights, which come into conflict with the welfare of the country."

—Senator Louis Wigfall



*Medals of Honor like this one were awarded to many Civil War soldiers, both white and African American.*



In April 1862 the Confederate congress passed a draft law requiring three years of military service for white men between the ages of 18 and 35. This automatically extended the service of all volunteers for two more years. After the horrible losses at the Battle of Antietam, the upper age for the draft became 45. Later it was raised again to 50. Owners of 20 or more slaves were excused from serving, and so were Southerners wealthy enough to hire a substitute to serve in their place.

The Confederate government took charge of the South's economy. It determined the amount of production of wool, cotton, and leather, and seized control of southern railroads from private owners. Farmers were required to contribute one tenth of their produce to the war effort.

To help raise money for the war, the Confederate congress imposed a tax on personal incomes. The Confederate government also authorized the army to seize male slaves for military labor. Though they were paid a monthly fee for borrowed slaves, planters resented this practice because it disrupted work on their plantations.

**The Impact of States' Rights** A fierce commitment to states' rights worked against the Confederate government and harmed the war effort in many ways. Georgia governor Joseph Brown proclaimed, "I entered into this revolution . . . to sustain the rights of the states . . . and I am *still* a rebel . . . no matter who may be in power."

Many Southerners shared the governor's point of view. Local authorities sometimes refused to cooperate with draft officials. Whole counties in some states were ruled by armed bands of draft-dodgers and deserters. It is estimated that perhaps half of Confederate men eligible for the draft failed to cooperate. "If we are defeated," warned an Atlanta newspaper, "it will be by the people at home."

**Seeking Help from Europe** Although the blockade effectively prevented southern cotton from reaching Great Britain and France, Southerners continued to hope for British and French intervention in the war. In May 1861 the Confederate government sent representatives to both nations. Even though the Confederacy failed to gain **recognition**, or official acceptance, as an independent nation, it did receive some help.

Great Britain agreed to allow its ports to be used to build Confederate privateers. One of these vessels, the *Alabama*, captured more than 60 northern merchant ships. In all, 11 British-built Confederate privateers forced most Union shipping from the high seas for much of the war.

Recognition did seem possible for a time in 1862. Napoleon III, the ruler of France, had sent troops into Mexico, trying to rebuild a French empire in the Americas. He welcomed the idea of an independent Confederate States of America on Mexico's northern border. However, France would not give the Confederacy open support without Great Britain's cooperation.

British opinion about the war was divided. Some leaders clearly sympathized with the Southerners. Many believed an independent South would be a better market for British products. Others, however, questioned whether the Confederacy would be able to win the war. The British government adopted a wait-and-see attitude. To get foreign help, the South would have to first prove itself on the battlefield.

## Politics in the North

After early losses to Confederate forces, President Lincoln and his government had to convince some northern citizens that maintaining the Union was worth the sacrifices they were being asked to make. In addition, the federal government found itself facing international crises as it worked to strengthen civilian support for the war.

**Tensions with Great Britain** British talks with the South aroused tensions between Great Britain and the United States. Late in 1861 Confederate president Davis again sent two representatives from the Confederacy to England and France. After evading the Union blockade, John Slidell and James Mason boarded the British mail ship *Trent* and steamed for Europe.

Soon a Union warship stopped the *Trent* in international waters, removed the two Confederates, and brought them to the United States. An outraged British government sent troops to Canada and threatened war unless Slidell and Mason were freed. President Lincoln ordered the release of the Confederates. "One war at a time," he said.

The Union vigorously protested Great Britain's support of the Confederacy. Lincoln demanded \$19 billion compensation from

### Main Idea CONNECTIONS

In what way was the Confederate government both strong and weak?



Great Britain for damages done by the privateers, and for other British actions on the South's behalf. This demand strained relations between the United States and Great Britain for nearly a decade after the war.

**Republicans in Control** With southern Democrats out of the United States Congress, the Republicans had little opposition. The Civil War Congresses thus became among the most active in American history. Republicans were able to pass a number of laws during the war that would have a lasting impact on the United States.

Southerners had opposed building a rail line across the Great Plains since Illinois senator Stephen Douglas first proposed it in the early 1850s. In July 1862, however, Congress passed the Pacific Railroad Act with little resistance. The law allowed the federal government to give land and money to companies for construction of a railroad line from Nebraska to the Pacific Coast. The Homestead Act, passed in the same year, offered free government land to people willing to settle on it.

The disappearance of southern opposition allowed Congress to raise tariff rates as well. The tariff became more a device to protect northern industries than to provide revenue for the government. Union leaders turned to other means to raise money for the war.

**Financial Measures** In 1861 the Republican-controlled Congress passed the first federal tax on income in American history. It collected 3 percent of the income of people earning more than \$800 a year. The Internal Revenue Act of 1862 imposed taxes on items such as liquor, tobacco, medicine, and newspaper ads. Nearly all these taxes ended when the war was over.

During the war, Congress reformed the nation's banking system. Since 1832, when President Jackson vetoed the recharter of the Second Bank of the United States, Americans had relied on state banks. In 1862 Congress passed an act that created a national currency, called **greenbacks** because of their color. This paper money was not backed by gold, but was declared by Congress to be acceptable for legal payment of all public and private debts.

**Emergency Wartime Actions** Like the government of the Confederacy, the United States government exercised great power during the Civil War. As in the South, efforts focused on raising troops and uniting the nation behind the war effort.



## Notable PRESIDENTS

### Abraham Lincoln

*"A house divided against itself cannot stand."*

—Speech in 1858

1861–1865

Abraham Lincoln entered the White House with little training in national politics. Before being elected in 1860, he had been a successful lawyer in Illinois and a member of the House of Representatives for a single term. Nothing, however, could have prepared him for the extraordinary challenges he would face as President.

Lincoln confronted crises on every side. Southern states began seceding from the Union even before he took office. The border states somehow had to be kept in the Union. Many Northerners, while opposing secession, did not want to fight the South, and white Northerners disagreed among themselves about slavery.

Lincoln's actions as President all pointed toward one goal: preserving the Union. He changed commanding generals again and again in a desperate search for one who could defeat the Confederate army. He suppressed freedom of speech and assembly. He issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free the slaves living behind Confederate lines, and in 1863 he called on free blacks to join the Union army. All of these actions brought a torrent of criticism on Lincoln. To some critics he was a power-hungry tyrant; to others he was weak and indecisive.

Along with his commitment to preserving the Union, Lincoln's greatest strengths were his sense of compassion and his ability to express powerful ideas in simple yet moving language. In fact, his words have come to help define the Civil War, from his warning before the war that "A house divided against itself cannot stand" to his hope in 1865 that Americans would face the future "with malice toward none, with charity for all." Assassinated shortly before the war's end, Lincoln would not live to work for the compassionate peace he favored. But he had done more than any other single person to preserve the nation at its time of greatest danger.

### Connecting to Today

Lincoln is remembered for leading the nation through a time of crisis. His ability to express ideas clearly created support for maintaining a unified nation. **How important is it that the President be able to rally the people behind a cause? Defend your opinion.**





This cartoon of 1863 echoes Lincoln's warning that "the enemy behind us is more dangerous to the country than the enemy before us."

**Government**  
Explain the symbols in the cartoon.

Four slave states remained in the Union—Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky. Because of their locations, the continued loyalty of these border states was critical to the Union. Lincoln considered Delaware, where few citizens held slaves, to be secure. In nearby Maryland, however, support for secession was strong. In September 1861 Lincoln ordered that all "disloyal" members of the Maryland state legislature be arrested. This action prevented a vote on secession and assured that Washington would not be surrounded by the Confederacy.

The North needed the loyalty of Kentucky and Missouri in order to keep control of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. In Missouri, Lincoln supported an uprising to overthrow the pro-Confederate state government. To secure Kentucky, he put the state under **martial law** for part of the war. This is emergency rule by military authorities, during which some Bill of Rights guarantees are suspended. Although Jefferson Davis imposed martial law on parts of the Confederacy, Lincoln is the only United States President ever to exercise this power.

The Union also established a draft. In March 1863 President Lincoln signed a law requiring military service of all white males age 20 to 45. Like the southern law, there were exceptions. To avoid the draft, a Northerner could pay the government \$300 or he could hire a substitute to serve in his place.

**Opposition to the War** Riots broke out in the North after the draft law was passed. Mobs of whites in New York City vented their rage at the draft in July 1863. More than 100 people died during four days of destruction. At least 11 of the dead were African Americans, who seemed to be targeted by the rioters.

Although Democrats could not control Congress, some raised their voices in protest against the war. Nicknamed **Copperheads**, after a type of poisonous snake, these Democrats warned that Republican policies would bring a flood of freed slaves to the North. They predicted these freed slaves would take jobs away from whites. Radical Copperheads tried to persuade Union soldiers to desert the army and other Northerners to resist the draft.

To silence the Copperheads and other opponents of the war, Lincoln resorted to extreme measures. He used the army to shut down opposition newspapers and denied others the use of the mails.

In some places Lincoln suspended the **writ of habeas corpus**. This is a legal protection requiring that a court determine if a person is lawfully imprisoned. Without it, people can be held in jail for indefinite periods without even being charged with a crime. The Constitution allows suspension of the writ during a rebellion.

More than 13,000 Americans who objected to the Union government's policies were imprisoned without trial during the war. They included newspaper editors and elected state officials, plus southern sympathizers and some who actually did aid the Confederacy. Most Northerners approved of Lincoln's actions as necessary to restore the Union.

## Emancipation and the War

While the Copperheads attacked Lincoln for making war on the South, abolitionists and others attacked him for not making it a war to end slavery. As the Union's battlefield casualties mounted, many Northerners began to question whether it was enough to simply restore the nation. Some, including a group in the Republican party called Radical Republicans, wanted the Confederacy punished for causing so much suffering. No punishment could be worse, the Radical Republicans argued, than freeing the slaveholders' "property."

**Lincoln and Slavery** At first, the President resisted pressure to make the abolition of slavery a Union war goal. He insisted that under the Constitution he was bound only to preserve and protect the nation. Lincoln explained this view in a letter to Horace Greeley, an abolitionist newspaper editor:



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“My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not to either save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could save the Union by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.”

—President Lincoln

Although Lincoln personally opposed slavery, he did not believe that he had the legal authority to abolish it. He also worried about the effect such an action would have on the loyalty of the border states. However, Lincoln recognized the importance of slavery to the South's war effort. Every slave working in a field or factory freed a white Southerner to fire a gun at Union soldiers. Gradually, he came to regard ending slavery as one more strategy for winning the war.

**The Emancipation Proclamation** In the fall of 1862, as Lee retreated south from Antietam, Lincoln proclaimed that on January 1, 1863, slaves in areas of rebellion against the government would be free. Then, on New Year's Day, 1863, he issued the final **Emancipation Proclamation**:

**KEY DOCUMENTS**

“I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States . . . as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion . . . do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are and henceforward shall be free. . . .”

—The Emancipation Proclamation,  
January 1863

**Reaction to the Proclamation** The decree had little direct impact on slavery because it applied only to places that were under Confederate control. Nevertheless, it was condemned in the South and debated in the North. Some abolitionists criticized Lincoln for not having gone far enough. The proclamation did nothing to free people enslaved in the border states, nor did it free slaves living in Confederate areas controlled by Union forces.

Other Northerners, fearing that freed people coming north would cause unemployment, criticized even this limited action. After

Lincoln's September announcement, the Democratic party made gains in the congressional elections of November 1862.

The response of black Northerners was much more positive. “We shout for joy that we live to record this righteous decree,” abolitionist Frederick Douglass exclaimed. Even if the proclamation brought no immediate end to slavery, it promised that an enslaved people would be free when the North won the war.

Perhaps the most significant reaction occurred in Europe. The abolition movement was strong in England. The Emancipation Proclamation, coupled with news of Lee's defeat at Antietam, ended any real chance that France and Great Britain would intervene in the war.

## African Americans Fight

The Emancipation Proclamation had two immediate effects. It inspired southern slaves who heard about it to free themselves by escaping to the protection of Union troops. It also encouraged African Americans to serve in the Union army.

**The Contraband Issue** Southern slaveholders usually fled with their slaves when the Union



Over the course of the Civil War, nearly 180,000 African Americans wore the Union uniform. **Government** How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the role of African Americans in the military?



army approached. Frequently, however, slaves remained behind or escaped to the safety of nearby Union forces. Believing they had no choice, some Union officers gave these slaves back to slaveholders who demanded return of their “property.”

Early in the war, Union general Benjamin Butler devised a legal argument that allowed the Union army to free captured and escaped slaves. During war, one side’s possessions may be seized by its enemy. Called **contraband**, these captured items become property of the enemy government. Butler maintained that if slaves were property then they could be considered contraband of war. The Union government, as their new owner, could then let the slaves go.

At first, the army employed these African Americans to build fortifications, drive wagons, and perform countless other noncombat jobs. After the Emancipation Proclamation, however, many enlisted to fight the Confederacy.

**African American Soldiers** When the Civil War began, black volunteers were not

allowed to join the Union army. In July 1862, following McClellan’s defeats in Virginia, Congress authorized Lincoln to accept African Americans in the army. Several months later, he made the announcement in the Emancipation Proclamation.

Given this encouragement, African Americans rushed to join the fight. By 1865 nearly 180,000 African Americans had enlisted in the Union army. More than half were black Southerners who had been freed from slavery by the fighting. For these soldiers, fighting to help free others who were still enslaved held special meaning. Many African Americans viewed the chance to fight against slavery as a milestone in their history. In total, African Americans composed almost 10 percent of the troops who served the North during the war.

On warships, black and white sailors served together. African American soldiers, however, served in all-black regiments under the command of white officers. Until June 1864 African Americans also earned less pay than white soldiers.

In July 1863, an African American regiment earned a place in history at Fort Wagner, a stronghold that protected the harbor at Charleston, South Carolina. On July 18, the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, commanded by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, led the attack on the fort. The regiment’s charge across a narrow spit of sand cost it nearly half its men. Frederick Douglass’s two sons were among the survivors; so was Sergeant William Carney, who became the first African American to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The actions of the 54th Massachusetts demonstrated what Frederick Douglass wrote in his newspaper the following month:

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“Once let a black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S.; let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship.”

—Frederick Douglass



“All that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of women ... would not do them justice for their conduct during the war,” said Abraham Lincoln. This woman cared for her children and her soldier husband in a Union camp in 1862. **Culture** In what other ways did women’s lives change during the war?



## The Hardships of War

The Union's changing policies regarding slavery in the South prompted thousands of slaves to escape to freedom. This development hurt the Confederacy in two ways. It depleted the South's labor force, and it provided the North with even greater numerical advantages in the war effort.

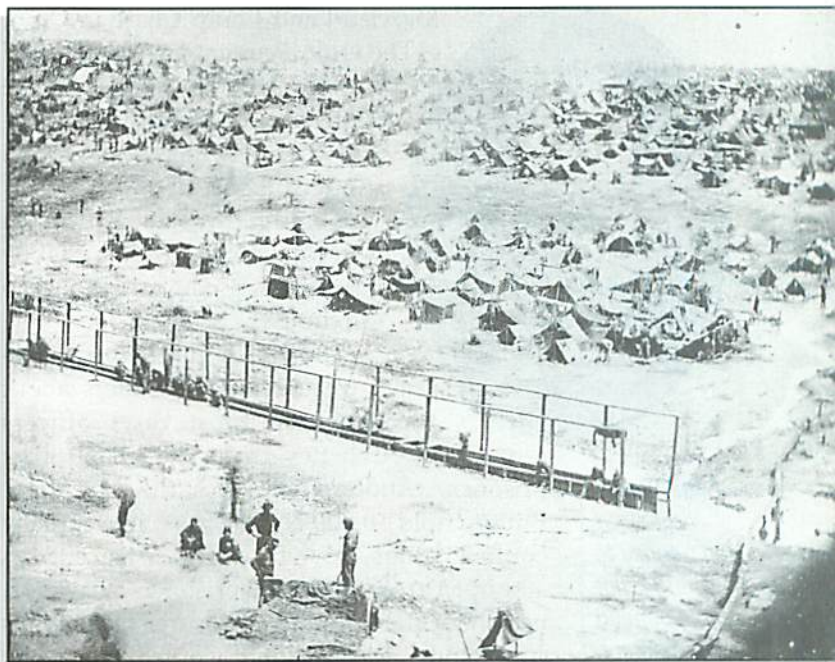
The war produced drastic changes in the lives of Northerners and Southerners. With the majority of men off fighting, women on both sides took on new responsibilities. Wives and mothers lived with the fear that every day could bring news of the loss of a loved one. In addition, both sides faced labor shortages, inflation, and other economic problems during the war. By 1863, however, it was clear that the North's greater resources were allowing it to meet these challenges, while the South could not.

**The Southern Economy** Among the problems the Confederacy faced during the war was a food shortage. Invading armies disrupted the South's food-growing regions as well as its production of cotton. In parts of the South not threatened by Union forces, the Confederate draft pulled large numbers of white males out of rural areas. Southern women worked the land, oversaw slaves, and tried to keep farms and plantations operating. However, food production declined in the South as the war progressed.

Many planters made the problem worse by resisting the central government's pleas to shift from raising cotton to growing food crops. While cotton piled up in warehouses, due to the Union blockade, food riots erupted in southern cities. The worst of these occurred in Richmond, where nearly 1,000 women looted bakeries and other shops in April 1863.

Although the Confederacy never was able to provide all the manufactured goods its army needed, southern industry grew during the war. The Confederate government supervised construction of factories to make railroad track, guns and ammunition, and many other items. Women filled many of the jobs in these factories.

The labor shortage and lack of goods contributed to inflation. By late 1862 a bag of salt that cost \$2 before the war was selling for \$60 in some places. The hardships at home increased desertions in the Confederate army. "We are poor men and are willing to defend our country but our families [come] first," a Mississippi soldier declared.



Conditions at Georgia's Andersonville prison evoked outrage from Northerners and calls for prisoner exchanges. **Economy** How did the state of the South's economy contribute to the horrible conditions of Confederate prison camps?

**The Northern Economy** The war hurt industries that depended heavily on southern markets or southern cotton. However, most northern industries boomed. Unlike the Confederacy, the North had the farms and factories to produce nearly everything its army and civilian population needed. War-related industries fared especially well. Philip Armour made a fortune packaging pork to feed Union soldiers. Samuel Colt ran his factory night and day producing guns for the army.

As in the South, when men went off to war, women filled critical jobs in factories and on farms. Many factory owners preferred women employees because they were paid less. This hiring practice kept wages down overall. Prices rose faster than pay during the war.

A few manufacturers made their profits even greater by selling the Union government inferior products: rusty rifles, boats that leaked, hats that dissolved in the rain. Uniforms made from compressed rags quickly fell apart. The soles came off some boots after a few miles of marching.

**Prison Camps** Captured Confederate soldiers were sent to prison camps throughout the North, including Point Lookout in





Clara Barton organized an agency to bring relief to wounded soldiers.

Maryland and Camp Chase in Ohio. The Ohio Penitentiary also housed some Confederate prisoners. The South's prison camps were located wherever there was room. Andersonville, its most notorious camp, was in a field in Georgia. Richmond's Libby Prison was a converted tobacco warehouse.

The North and South generally treated their prisoners about the same. In most cases officers received better treatment than other prisoners. Andersonville was the exception. Built to hold 10,000 Northerners, it eventually confined nearly 35,000 men in a fenced, 26-acre open area. About 100 prisoners a day died, usually of starvation or exposure. The camp's commander was the only Confederate to be later tried for war crimes. He was convicted and hanged.

**Improving Medical Conditions** While soldiers faced miserable conditions in prison camps, life was not much better in the battle camps. Health and medical conditions on both sides were frightful. About one in four Civil War soldiers did not survive the war. A Union soldier was three times more likely to die in camp or in a hospital than he was to be killed on the battlefield. In fact, about one in five Union soldiers wounded in battle later died from their wounds. While most doctors were aware of the relationship between cleanliness and infection, they did

not know how to sterilize their equipment. Surgeons sometimes went for days without even washing their instruments.

On both sides, thousands of women volunteered to care for the sick and wounded. Government clerk Clara Barton quit her job in order to provide needed supplies and first aid to Union troops in camp and during battle. Known to soldiers as the "angel of the battlefield," Barton continued her service after the war by founding the American Red Cross. Mental health reformer Dorothea Dix volunteered to organize and head the Union army's nursing corps. Some 4,000 women served as nurses for the northern army. By the end of the war, nursing was no longer only a man's profession.

Sanitation in most army camps was nonexistent. Rubbish and rotting food littered the ground. Human waste and heaps of animal manure polluted water supplies. Epidemics of contagious diseases, such as mumps and measles, swept through camps. Sick lists were lengthy. Sometimes only half the troops in a regiment were available for battle.

The United States Sanitary Commission, created in June 1861, attempted to combat these problems. Thousands of volunteers, mostly women, inspected army hospitals and camps. They organized cleanups and provided advice about controlling infection, disease prevention, sewage disposal, and nutrition. Despite these and similar Confederate efforts, about twice as many soldiers on each side died from disease as from the guns of the enemy.

## SECTION 2 REVIEW

### Comprehension

- 1. Key Terms** Define: (a) draft; (b) recognition; (c) greenback; (d) martial law; (e) Copperhead; (f) writ of *habeas corpus*; (g) Emancipation Proclamation; (h) contraband.
- 2. Summarizing the Main Idea** Give some examples of steps the Confederate and Union governments took to support the war effort.
- 3. Organizing Information** Create a web diagram showing the legislation passed by the Republican Congress during the war. Label the center circle *Republican Legislation 1861–1862*. Note three or four pieces of legislation in surrounding circles.

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Analyzing Time Lines** Review the time line at the start of the section. Which event on the time line, in your opinion, had the greatest impact on the Civil War?
- 5. Determining Relevance** In what ways did the Emancipation Proclamation affect the war?

### Writing Activity

- 6. Writing an Expository Essay** Use information from the section to write a one-page essay describing the effects the war had on the economies of the North and the South.