



Revised History

The Great Unanswered Question

By Al Benson January 30, 2021

Here and there I get remarks directed at some of the historical articles I write concerning the War of Northern Aggression. Most of the comments seem to deal with the slavery issue. Some individuals with great imagination almost seem to think that the South fought that war so we could still keep slaves to this very day.

To these political worthies I have often directed this question—If the North was so gung ho as to fight against the South to free the slaves, then why did not the North first free all the slaves in states that, for one reason or another, remained part of the Union? This would include Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, and the newly created state of West Virginia. That's right—West Virginia. The newly created state of West Virginia entered the Union as a slave state, not as a free state. The response I have gotten to this question has been one of ear-shattering silence! No one wants to touch this question and so they just pretend it doesn't exist or that they didn't hear anyone ask it. It's probably the most ignored question of the past several decades.

To these harbingers of Yankee righteousness I would direct the book by Gene Kizer Jr. which I reviewed a few years back *Slavery Was Not the Cause of the War Between the States* published by **Charleston Athenaeum Press** <http://www.BonnieBluePublishing.com> Check the internet and see if you can find it if you want the truth instead of Yankee fables. If you don't really want the truth (and I suspect many don't) then continue to ignore it, but if you do that, then please shut up about all this slavery foolishness!

Mr. Kizer noted on page xxiii of the introduction to his book that “Most people in the North (95-98% according to historians Lee Benson and Gavin Wright) were not abolitionists. They did not care about freeing the slaves who would then come North and be job competition. No Republican could be elected in the North on the platform of directly ending slavery but they could agitate on slavery in the West with good results. It was a hot political issue driven as much by rallying votes—vote Republican:...Lincoln himself stated in the **Lincoln-Douglas Debates** that the West was to be reserved for white people from all over the earth...Neither slaves nor free blacks were welcome in Lincoln's West.”

Kizer observed a comment by Lincoln scholar Richard N. Current where Current stated: “Lincoln and his fellow Republicans, in insisting that Congress must prohibit slavery in the West, were dealing with political phantoms.” Kizer tells us that “In 1860, there were only two slaves in Kansas and 15 in Nebraska, and that was after being open to slavery for ten years. As stated above, Current did not believe slavery would have lasted another generation, even in the deep South.”

And Kizer reiterates “Slavery was not the cause of the War Between the States. Once you understand the true cause—the imminent economic annihilation of the North which was coming fast—all other actions taken by Lincoln and everybody else make infinitely more sense. Abraham Lincoln needed to start his war as quickly as he could. He needed his blockade of the South in place as fast as possible to keep Europeans and especially the English from forming trade and military alliances with the South...” Kizer also noted that: “Ramsdell states also that the North's gaping self-inflicted wound, the Morrill Tariff, kicked in and greatly added to the panic and call for war in the North as the Northern shipping industry was largely rerouted, in one fell swoop, away from the high-tariff North and into the low-tariff South where protective tariffs were unconstitutional.”

Now I realize that Mr. Kizer's research will never convince the professional South haters of their gross errors on the slavery issue, but at least they can never say no one told them.