Six Major Causes of the Civil War

1. Aggression of the Slave Power
   ✓ Slave power top 1% of Southern population, represented the entire region.
   ✓ Believed that the North was interfering with their way of life
   ✓ Demanded 4 resolutions from the North:
     1. Equal rights
     2. Enforcement of fugitive slave law
     3. Restore government balance
     4. Restore equal liberty
   ✓ Vehemently opposed northern abolitionists, stirred the entire South into secession to satisfy their own minority interests.
   ✓ South’s true desire was to dominate the ENTIRE US with slavery.
   ✓ South used popular sovereignty as a pretext for slavery.
     1. Kansas-Nebraska Act
     2. Dred Scott Decision (repelled Missouri Compromise)

⇒ South Claimed that the only way to preserve the union was to listen to them.
   1. Restore things to what they once was, balance between north and south.
   2. California is on the verge of destroying this balance the south will be completely submitted to the control of the north

2. Issue of Nationalism vs. State Sovereignty
   ✓ Constitution is a compact between the states and the people, if one side should not meet to its terms; the other has the right to withdraw.
     • South claimed that the government had failed to abide by the Constitution (i.e. interfering with slavery), thus they had the right to secede.
   ✓ South fought for greater State power (South Carolina nullification), eventually a conflict would arise.
   ✓ Reason for Destruction of compact?
     2. Kansas-Nebraska Act - Kansas turned into a slave state when northerners were already settled in.

⇒ South felt OPPRESSED by north. Since south is not correctly represented, they declared that the compact is broken and northerners failed to listen.
   1. Nothing says this is democracy and majority rules, therefore the south MUST listen. South felt that the north will beginning to push for nullification of all southern proposals, further damaging their way of life.

3. Economic Sectionalism
   ✓ South relied on cotton, North specialized in manufacturing → Both sides fought for government policies favoring one side
   ✓ North emerged superior, government subsidized Northern business
     • E.g. Roads/Railroads located primarily in North
   ✓ Preludes a bloody conflict, South had nothing to gain from remaining in the Union.
   ✓ South argument: Congress favored north, passed laws that helped northern economy
North argument: Didn’t have balance because if south was in control, they would revoke all of the tariffs. Claimed south wanted to expand slavery.

South felt that north was gaining too much economic power and holding monopoly.

1. Protectionist + Abolitionist > South

North felt that south lusted for more control in the government.

Whatever one side wanted, the other despised.

A country runs on money, therefore economy determines EVERYTHING.

Because the country’s economy is heavily argued, the issue of the people way of life and slavery will definitely be used to defend it.

4. Irresponsible Agitators

Factors deciding “inevitable war” are insufficient, blundering leadership is necessary for explanation

- “Fifty four forty or fight!” slogan did not result in a fight even though all factors were present.


5. Moral Urgency of Slavery

- Gradual emancipation met no progress in the South

- Violated basic human rights, there could be no compromising since the issue was entirely “right or wrong”

- Neither side could accept the viewpoint of the other, conflict would be inevitable.

6. Failure of Democracy

- Issues arise that cannot be solved by democratic processes

  - Slavery could not be resolved through democratic means (e.g. compromising) \( \rightarrow \) failure of democracy

  - I.E. Failure of Kansas-Nebraska Act

  - California strangled. If it takes one side the other will be agitated.

- In democracy, the minority must willingly submit to the interests of the majority

- Tension ALWAYS kept on increasing due to failure of compromises.

- One side is ALWAYS displeased.

- Conflict becomes necessary when the system fails