

Compromise of 1877:

In the months following the Election of 1876, but prior to the inauguration in March 1877, Republican and Democratic leaders secretly hammered out a compromise to resolve the election impasse and address other outstanding issues. The Compromise of 1877 was an informal, unwritten deal that settled the disputed 1876 U.S. Presidential election; through it Republican Rutherford B. Hayes was awarded the White House on the understanding that he would remove the federal troops from South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana.

Consequently, the incumbent (present day) President, (R) Ulysses Grant, removed the soldiers from Florida before Hayes. As soon as the troops left, many Republicans also left (or became Democrats) and the "Redeemer" Democrats took control.



More of the Compromise

The compromise essentially stated that Southern Democrats would acknowledge Hayes as President, but only if the Republicans comply with various demands:

1. The removal of all Federal troops from the former Confederate States.
2. The appointment of at least one Southern Democrat to Hayes' cabinet.
3. The construction of another transcontinental railroad using the Texas and Pacific in the South.
4. Legislation to help industrialize the South.

End of Reconstruction

Once the parties had agreed to these terms, the Electoral Commission performed its duty and Hayes was named president two days before the inauguration.

Why did the Democrats so easily give up the presidency that they had probably legitimately won? Despite months of inflammatory talk, few responsible people could contemplate going to war. A compromise was mandatory and the one achieved in 1877, if it had been honored, would have given the Democrats what they wanted. There was no guarantee that with Samuel J. Tilden as president the Democrats would have fared as well.

To the four million former slaves in the South, the Compromise of 1877 was the "Great Betrayal." Republican efforts to assure civil rights for the blacks were totally abandoned. Historians argue that the agreement should not be called a compromise. Others emphasize that the Republican Party abandoned the Southern blacks.

In any case, Reconstruction ended, and the supremacy of the Democratic Party in the South was cemented with the rise of the "Redeemer" governments that removed the Republicans from power. After the Compromise of 1877, white supremacy generally caused the South to vote Democratic in elections for federal office ("Solid South") until 1966

Answer the following questions:

1. What gains did both Democrats and Republicans receive due to the Compromise of 1877?

Democrats	Republicans

2. After reading briefly about the Compromise of 1877, compose a short 2 sentence identification (5W) about the compromise. Include the **SO WHAT?**

Who: _____

What: _____

Where: _____

When: _____

Why: _____
