

The Union in Peril**Section 2**

Protest, Resistance, and Violence

Terms and Names

Fugitive Slave Act Law that provided for harsh treatment for escaped slaves and for those who helped them

personal liberty laws Laws passed by Northern states forbidding the imprisonment of escaped slaves

Underground Railroad Secret network of people who hid fugitive slaves who went north to freedom

Harriet Tubman Famous “conductor” on the Underground Railroad

Harriet Beecher Stowe Author of the antislavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Uncle Tom’s Cabin Antislavery novel

Kansas-Nebraska Act Law that split Nebraska into the territories of Nebraska and Kansas and allowed for popular sovereignty there

John Brown Fierce opponent of slavery who led a raid that killed five proslavery people

Bleeding Kansas Nickname given to the Kansas Territory because of the bloody violence there

Before You Read

In the last section, you read about the issue of slavery in the territories.

In this section, you will learn how the controversy became violent.

As You Read

Use a time line to take notes on the major events in the growing conflict between the North and the South.

FUGITIVE SLAVES AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

(Pages 310–312)

How did the North react to the Fugitive Slave Act?

The Compromise of 1850 made the **Fugitive Slave Act** much stricter. It required harsh punishment for escaped slaves—and for anyone who helped them. This made many Northerners angry. As a result, nine Northern states passed **personal liberty laws**. These laws banned the imprisonment of escaped slaves. The

laws also guaranteed that escaped slaves would have jury trials.

In addition, free African Americans and white abolitionists organized the **Underground Railroad**. This was a secret network of volunteers who hid fugitive slaves on their dangerous journey north to freedom. **Harriet Tubman**, an escaped slave, was a famous leader of the Underground Railroad.

Meanwhile, a popular book helped many in the North see the fight to ban slavery as a moral struggle. In 1852,

Section 2, *continued*

Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This novel showed the horrors of slavery.

The book prompted Northern abolitionists to increase their protests against the Fugitive Slave Act. Southerners criticized the book as an attack on their way of life. Several Southern writers wrote novels that attempted to show that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was based on lies. However, they were unable to dispel the growing belief that slavery was evil and that it damaged families, both white and black.

1. What was the Underground Railroad?

However, Douglas did not realize how strongly the North had come to oppose slavery. The entire Nebraska territory was north of the Missouri Compromise line. Because of this, the North argued that both Nebraska and Kansas should be free states. Northerners opposed Douglas's proposal. They saw it as an attempt to increase slavery.

Douglas's bill caused bitter debates in Congress. **The Kansas-Nebraska Act** became law in 1854. It split Nebraska into the territories of Nebraska and Kansas. Each state would decide whether or not to allow slavery.

2. What did the Kansas-Nebraska Act do?

TENSION IN KANSAS AND NEBRASKA (Pages 312–315) **What conflict arose over the Nebraska Territory?**

In 1854, the issue of slavery in the territories again erupted. That year, Stephen Douglas proposed splitting the Nebraska Territory into two territories—Nebraska and Kansas.

He had several motives. Douglas was anxious to organize these territories because he believed that most of the nation's people wished to see the western lands become part of the Union. Douglas also believed that continued expansion would help unify the nation. He assumed that one state would enter as a free state, the other a slave state. This would keep a balance between the North and South.

VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN "BLEEDING KANSAS" (Pages 315–317)

Why did violence erupt in Kansas?

Proslavery and antislavery people rushed into Kansas. Each side wanted to have enough people to decide the vote on slavery its way. Violence soon erupted in Kansas. **John Brown**, a fierce opponent of slavery, killed five proslavery people in a raid. This killing triggered dozens of violent actions throughout the territory. About 200 people were killed. Because of the violence on both sides, the territory was nicknamed **Bleeding Kansas**.

The violence over the issue of slavery also spread to the Senate. As senators debated the situation in Kansas, a relative of an antislavery senator attacked a proslavery senator on the Senate floor.

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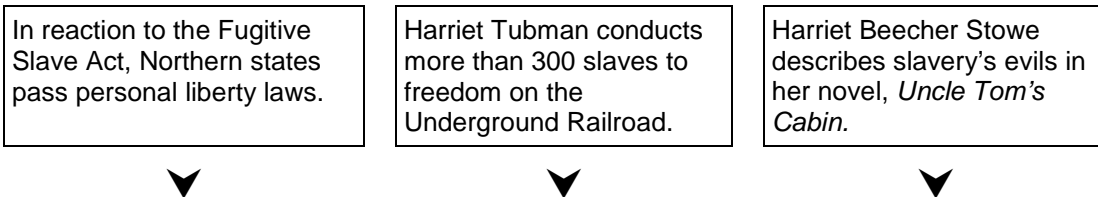
The widening gulf between North and South affected the nation's political parties, as well. As the debate over slavery grew more intense, national parties broke apart—and groups started new parties.

3. Why was Kansas referred to as Bleeding Kansas?

Section 2, *continued*

As you read, make notes to answer questions about the issue of slavery.

After the Compromise of 1850 is reached, Northern abolitionists continue to attack slavery.



The North-South split grows deeper. Stephen Douglas proposes replacing the Missouri Compromise with the Kansas-Nebraska Act.	
1. How had the Missouri Compromise proposed to limit slavery?	2. How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act propose to deal with the issue of slavery?

The Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed in 1854.	
3. Why did Douglas believe that popular sovereignty would solve the problem of slavery in the Nebraska Territory?	4. Why did popular sovereignty, in fact, lead to "Bleeding Kansas," instead of settling the issue of slavery in the Nebraska Territory?