The biggest issue in the 1850’s was slavery. The debate between if it was morally correct and constitutionally allowed. People at this time were divided based on their situation and where they lived. There were many different ideas defending both sides.

The slave owners in the south believed that it was their natural right to control a believed to be lesser race. They also knew nothing else than owning slaves since it has been going on for generations. “Slave labor had become so entrenched in the Southern economy that nothing—not even the belief that all men were created equal—would dislodge it…Between 1801 and 1835 alone, the U.S. cotton exports grew from 100,000 bales to more than a million, comprising half of all U.S. exports,” (Timmons, 2018). If this huge industry was hit with emancipation huge changes would have to happen to bring the south up to speed with the south. This would cost a ton of money and change that is not welcome in the south.

Many people saw that this divide wasn’t going to be able to last. If one side wanted slavery and one didn’t there were going to have to be changes since you can’t please both at the same time.

“’A house divided against itself cannot stand.’ I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved – I do not expect the house to fall – but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery, will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new – North as well as South” (Davidson, 278).

If one side thought the other was unlawful, they are not going to sit there and allow it. They are going to elect a legislature that agrees, and he will make changes.

The proslavery community was very worried since they saw that their way of life was in danger. They knew that the other side was not messing around when talking about abolishing slaver. “‘Bleeding Kansas’ became a fact with the Sack of Lawrence (May 21, 1856), in which a proslavery mob swarmed into the town of Lawrence and wrecked and burned the hotel and newspaper office in an effort to wipe out this ‘hotbed of abolitionism,’” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1998). The proslavery mob was willing to do anything to keep slavery alive even destroying personal property to make it happen.

When people make the argument of if slavery was a moral conflict or not, it was. People didn’t have the right to imprison other races and use them as labor just because they have different color skin. One side was willing to do anything to keep their way of life while the other was trying to make the whole country one by keeping it constitutional and morally correct.

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