**South Carolina Declaration of Causes of Secession, Dec. 24, 1860**

And now that the state of South Carolina has resumed her separate and equal place among nations, she deems it necessary to declare the reasons which have led to this act.

In 1787, delegates were appointed by the states to revise the articles of Confederation; on September 17th 1787, these delegates recommended the Constitution for adoption by the states.

These delegates established a compact between the states, a Government with clearly defined powers, limited by the Constitution itself. We maintain that in every compact between parties, the obligation to follow the agreement is mutual. Whenever one party shall break that agreement, the other parties are released from following it.

Fourteen of the Northern states have refused for years to fulfill their constitutional obligations. They have enacted laws which either nullify the acts of Congress, or make it impossible to enforce them. Thus the constitutional compact has been deliberately broken; and the consequence follows that South Carolina is released from her obligation.

People in these states have encouraged and assisted thousands of our slaves to leave their homes; and those who remain, have been incited by individuals, books, and pictures to servile insurrection.

A geographical line has been drawn across the union, and all the states north of that line have united in the election of a man to the office of President of the United States whose opinions are hostile to slavery. He has declared that the public mind must rest in the belief that slavery is in the course of ultimate extinction.

The guarantees of the Constitution will then no longer exist: The equal rights of the states will be lost.

We, therefore the people of South Carolina, declare that the Union that existed between this State and the other states of North America is dissolved, and that the State of South Carolina has resumed her position among the nations of the world.

**QUESTIONS**

1. South Carolina describes the Constitution as a compact. Explain. Under what circumstances is a state released from having to follow the compact?
2. Explain three grievances South Carolina had against the Northern States.
3. What other documents that we have studied in this class, could you compare this document to? Explain.
4. Based on the reasons given, do you think South Carolina was justified in seceding from the Union? Explain.

**Abraham Lincoln On Secession**

[The secession of the southern states] presents to the whole family of man the question of whether a democracy--a government of the people, by the same people--can, or cannot, maintain its existence against its own domestic foes. It presents the question whether discontented individuals, too few in numbers to control the government, can break up their Government, and thus practically put an end to free government upon the earth. It forces us to ask: "Is there, in all republics, this inherent, and fatal weakness?'' "Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?''

1. According to Lincoln, what dilemma do democracies face? Why did he believe that allowing the Southern states to leave could “put an end to free government upon the earth”? Do you agree with Lincoln? Explain.