Essay #5

# Review Essay

The meeting aimed at drafting the Constitution of United States held eleven years prior the signing of declaration of Independence. Aim of drafting the Constitution was to strengthen federation, and to provide power which Article of Confederation failed to deliver. At the very basic level, the newly proposed constitution focused over the system of governance, the roles, and responsibilities of the central government and how the members will be elected to the House of Representatives. Some of the primarily proposed drafts got acceptance after some heated debate, but the Bill of Rights proved critical. There existed a notion among Americans that Bill of Rights actually guided the naked interests of the framers. These interests actually built the opinion in favor slavery. Especially, the way in which struggle against slavery was inscribed in the documents of American Revolution and the declaration of Independence. Historians argue that it depicts the manner in which the interests of the Northern states came in clash with those of the Southern States.

# How the constitution was pro-slavery?

‘Constitution as pro-slavery document’ was a topic of great interest among the abolitionists of the nineteenth century. Activists from that time like William Garrison wrote that ‘Constitution’ as a preliminary charter needed some overhauling of the issues. Stanley Harrold also reiterated this opinion since he believed that a statutory silence over the rights and demands of a particular community raises deep concerns. Such thinkers actually wanted to convey that Constitution was a pro-slavery document. Some abolitionists like Fredrick Douglass and Gerrit Smith, however, disagreed with the traditional notion of slavery. They believed that the American constitution never resorted to adding slavery and has always denied such perception by adding legally relevant clauses. For Waldstreischer, “the compromise of 1787 joined together two forms of slavery, one as a form of governance and second as an economic institution.” To contemplate, one must notices that framers of the United States Constitution used slavery to(Hine and Harrold 2013, 111) limit government, as well by putting slavery under the control of both local and national government. More precisely, slavery was alternatively flashed and kept silent as a subject of political debate. It was not that much rejected in the constitution, compared to as much it contained.

# How it was anti-slavery?

The constitution left a very narrow space to consider it an anti-slavery document. The primary reason for this argument remains that the constitution refrained from mentioning it as a property or something of critical nature. The silence pertained throughout this document was meant to restrict embarrassment and limit the damage control. For such reasons, the critics of the American values lambast Americans for such hypocrisy and for calling themselves as defender of human values (The African Americans Many Rivers to Cross Episode 2 2016). The framers actually not wanted to explicitly refer to slavery as something existential in America or critical for Americans. Constitution was therefore kept deliberately ambiguous. The framers actually had less insight about slavery- submersed constitution and for such reason they finally left this upon the American people to accept or reject such institution.

# Conclusion

Once the constitution was ratified, the issue of slavery won the support of many. Since the constitution was silent over it, therefore it required a constitutional amendment to destruct. It all happened quite costly i.e. after many lost their lives in the civil war. The thirteenth amendment got ratification and after the emancipation proclamation was insufficient to get the nation away from slavery. The need for such amendment went largely in the favor that the original document of slavery endorsed slavery in whatsoever form it was. The ‘thirteenth amendment’ opened the ways for the American nation to get rid of this sin.

# References:

Hine, William C., and Stanley Harrold. 2013. *African Americans: A Concise History*. Prentice-Hall.

*The African Americans Many Rivers to Cross Episode 2: The Age of Slavery (1800 -1860)*. 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gj47wDxiU08 (September 10, 2019).