The Crusade Against Slavery


Many Americans came to believe that enslaving people was wrong. "All men are created equal," says the Declaration of Independence. All have the unalienable rights to life and to liberty. All of the early U.S. presidents-Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe-felt that slavery was wrong and believed it would end in time. But saying that slavery is wrong was one thing. Actually doing something to abolish it was another. In fact, all of those early presidents, except John Adams, owned slaves themselves. Several northern states passed laws to end slavery. But no Southern state did, and that is where most enslaved people lived.

Some slave owners in the South freed their enslaved workers. One slave owner in North Carolina gave these four reasons for doing so:

1. Reason the first: every human being . . . is entitled to freedom.
2. Reason the second: my conscience condemns me for keeping them in slavery.
3. Reason the third: the golden rule directs us to do unto every human creature, as we would wish to be done unto.
4. Reason the fourth and last: I wish to die with a clear conscience that I may not be ashamed to appear before my master in a future world.

But these were all individual deeds. These owners were only a small minority of all slave owners. The flame of antislavery feeling never burned strongly in the South, and eventually died out.

Abolitionists wanted to light that flame again. Most abolitionists were religious people. They believed that slavery was not just wrong but a great sin in the eyes of God. They thought the way to end slavery was to appeal to the conscience of slave owners. They thought that once
masters understood how sinful it was for one person to own another, they would give up their enslaved workers, just the way that North Carolina slaveholder did.

Things did not work out as they hoped. Slave owners were not interested in the abolitionists' message. Some of them even said that enslaved people benefited from slavery!

Abolitionists changed their plan. They began educating Northerners on the evils of slavery. They formed antislavery organizations. They handed out more than a million pamphlets. They gave public lectures.

William Lloyd Garrison used his newspaper The Liberator to inform people about the evils of slavery.

William Lloyd Garrison was one of the leading abolitionists. Garrison published an abolitionist newspaper called *The Liberator*. He also started the American Anti-Slavery Society, which was the main organization of abolitionist reformers. Frederick Douglass was another important abolitionist. Douglass had escaped from slavery. When he spoke about slavery, his listeners knew that he spoke from experience. Douglass later wrote a book about his life as an enslaved person and his escape. His book is called *Narrative of the Life of Frederick*...
Douglass, an American Slave. He, too, published an abolitionist newspaper.

At first, there were just a few abolitionists. Only a few thousand people in the whole country bought The Liberator. Even in the North, where most people did not like slavery, abolitionists were not popular. That is because abolitionists were not just saying they did not like slavery. They were saying that the country should do something about it—abolish it, not at some time in the future but now.

Abolitionists believed deeply in their cause. They kept working to achieve freedom for enslaved people. In public meetings, they described the cruel treatment of enslaved workers, which included beatings and whippings. They spoke of husbands being separated from wives and of children being sold and separated from their parents. In time, a growing number of people came to understand the true horrors of slavery. Some came over to the abolitionists’ side and supported their arguments. And even those who did not come all the way over believed more strongly than ever that slavery was evil and must not be allowed to spread.

Still, it was not until the end of the Civil War in 1865, when Constitutional amendments were passed, that the abolitionists saw their goal become a reality.
abolish  a·bol·ish

Advanced Definition
transitive verb
1. to do away with; put a stop to; end.

   Compulsory military service has been abolished.

   Should the death penalty be abolished?

2. to take out of existence.

   Some wish to abolish the former leader's name from the history books.

Spanish cognate

abolir: The Spanish word abolir means abolish.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. Initially, the eradication project aimed to abolish polio by 2000. Eleven years and $8 billion later, the virus stubbornly hangs on.

2. It's been nearly 142 years since the Civil War ended and Congress ratified the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States. Saying sorry now, critics say, just doesn't make sense.

3. In the 1830s Sam Sharpe, a Baptist preacher, led a large revolution known as the Christmas Rebellion. Several years later, slavery in Jamaica was finally abolished for good. Soon after, the sugar industry collapsed.

4. The monarchy of Brazil was abolished in 1891. Brazil's government is now made up of a president, a legislature, and a judicial branch. A constitution protects the rights of the people against unfair rule.

5. Some slaves in the North were offered freedom to fight for the British during the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). However, slavery wasn't abolished in the United States until the end of the Civil War (1861-1865). New Jersey, for example, reported 18 slaves in 1860.
minority  

Definition  

noun  

1. a number or amount that is less than half.

   A minority of students protested the new rules.

2. a group of people who are different from the larger population in some way.

   Many countries have laws that protect minorities.

Advanced Definition  

noun  

1. a segment or amount consisting of less than half the total. (Cf. majority.)

2. a group that differs in race, ethnic background, religion, or political ideas from the majority of people in a society.

3. the state of being under legal adulthood. (Cf. majority.)

adjective  

1. of or pertaining to a minority.

Spanish cognate  

minoría: The Spanish word minoría means minority.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. It has been amended to give women and minority groups more rights.

2. Born in 1965, Van Zyl was a member of South Africa's white minority.

3. Hispanics, also known as Latinos, make up one of the fastest-growing minority group in the country.

4. Majority may rule in the United States, but the nation's founders wanted to make sure minority voices were still heard.

5. Democrat Nancy Pelosi from California became the first female Speaker of the House. She held that position from 2007 to 2011 and is currently the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.
movement  move·ment

Definition
noun
1. a motion or way of moving.

The dancers performed some beautiful movements.

Advanced Definition
noun
1. change in position or location.

His legs were paralyzed and not capable of movement.

The window was open, and there was slight movement of the curtains.

There was hurried movement toward the open doors of the train.

2. a particular instance or way of changing place or position in space.

Each movement of her arm was painful.

The movements in ballet are graceful and highly stylized.

3. a trend or course of events.

The lecture focused on the movement toward individualism in society.

4. a group of people or organizations acting to achieve a common goal.

Ending the Vietnam War was the goal of the peace movement.

5. progression through a sequence, as of things, events, or stages in a literary work.

6. a main section in a musical composition.

The theme is repeated throughout the second movement of the symphony.

7. a change of position of military troops, ships, weapons, or supplies.

The spies detected no movement of the enemy troops.

8. the act of emptying the bowels, or the feces so evacuated.
Spanish cognate

movimiento: The Spanish word movimiento means movement.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. Both people and animals use body language--gestures and movements--to communicate without words.

2. Like an extremely large pinwheel, wind turbines have blades that rotate when the wind blows, and this movement generates electricity.

3. The Mayan farming calendar was based on the movement of the sun and the stars. It had 365 days just like ours!

4. Water moves. It goes from the land to the air. Then it moves back to the land. This movement is called the water cycle.

5. It limits the lower leg's side-to-side movement and the knee's movement from front to back. It also prevents the shin from moving too far forward.

6. Fast-twitch fibers help with quick movements, such as jumping to catch a ball or sprinting. Most muscles are a mixture of slow- and fast-twitch fibers.

7. In fact, now she's leading a movement to get rid of bullying for good. And she has one of the world's most powerful people on her side-U.S. President Barack Obama.

8. Then I use my sharp eyes to look for mice. I would love a tasty treat to begin my adventurous evening. Suddenly, I see some movement behind a trash can.

9. During the late 1800s, the Symbolist movement started with French writers in response to the rigid structure of writing. They were also responding to society's age of reason and value of material things.

10. "Scientists can then apply rules of physics and biomechanics [the science of body movement] to determine how [dinosaurs] move." The image displayed on the computer screen suggests that T. rex's bone structure would have made it impossible for the lumbering giant to reach that speed.