

Union Advantages in the Civil War

When the Southern states announced they were seceding from the Union one by one, no doubt they knew that their decision would not be the end of the issue. They left the Union unconstitutionally and the Civil War soon followed. Although the Southern states believed fully in their cause and were fighting on their home turf, they could not overcome the advantages the North had going into the war. The economics, leadership, and population advantages of the North far outnumbered the advantages of the South during the Civil War, creating a victory for the Union.

The first obvious advantage the North had was an already established national economy and military. Their economy was a strong, manufacturing-based one. They had an infrastructure of factories and manufacturing capabilities in place. They had established banks and a thriving economy. The North plainly had greater ability to produce the military goods they needed to fight the Civil War. They could easily wipe out the few Southern factories there were and severely handicap their production capabilities. Coupled with that, the Union wisely took control of the rivers and waterways that the Confederacy would have benefitted from in transporting goods. They also formed a blockade which made it difficult for the Confederacy to trade for the goods they lacked with foreign nations. Without the ability to trade, transport, nor produce the goods they needed, they were at a distinct disadvantage.

In addition to their strong war economy and manufacturing capabilities, the Union also had effective military leaders, an army and navy, and an established government in place. Philip Sheridan, Ulysses S. Grant, and Abraham Lincoln were just some of the amazing leaders that tipped the scale to the side of the northerners. Their experience, coupled with a government that the population already trusted, gave them the ability to make and execute decisions, organize, strategize, and attack more efficiently. The Union troops, though largely volunteers, were better trained as well. They had officers and experienced military personnel who could train the volunteer forces. The South had no standing army and no navy at all. They resorted to trying to use civilian vessels and

secretly buying what they could from private companies in Britain. They scrambled, but they could not compete with the Union's military and government for long.

Finally, along with their other advantages, the Union had an overwhelming population advantage. The northern armies outnumbered the southern troops by three to one. They knew that they had many more troops and it used it to their advantage strategically. They could divide and conquer and also send for reinforcements and back-up. When it came down to it, they also knew that even if they had more casualties, they would be able to keep on fighting anyway. They knew that the South would eventually run out of troops. The larger population also provided for more back up support in things like producing needed goods, food, weapons, and meeting any other needs of the troops. Being outnumbered was not something the Confederacy could easily overcome, and in the end, was one of the major causes for a Union victory.

The unconstitutional secession of the Southern states could not last long with the overwhelming strength and advantages that the North had going into the Civil War. The North simply had a more established economy, industrial base, government, leadership, and military. They had more troops, more money, better weapon production, and control over trading and transportation methods. Though the costs were great and the healing would be long, in the end, the advantages of the North were enough to defeat the Confederacy, end the Civil War, and reunify the nation.