

Rising National Tensions

1850-1860

Abolitionism

- *Spread in North*
- **Frederick Douglass**: runaway slave who became abolitionist leader
- **William Lloyd Garrison**: editor of abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*
- **Underground Railroad**: elaborate network of white abolitionists, free blacks and slaves (not only Harriet Tubman)
- Total number of fugitives assisted by the UGR 1830-1860 was between 70,000 and 100,000

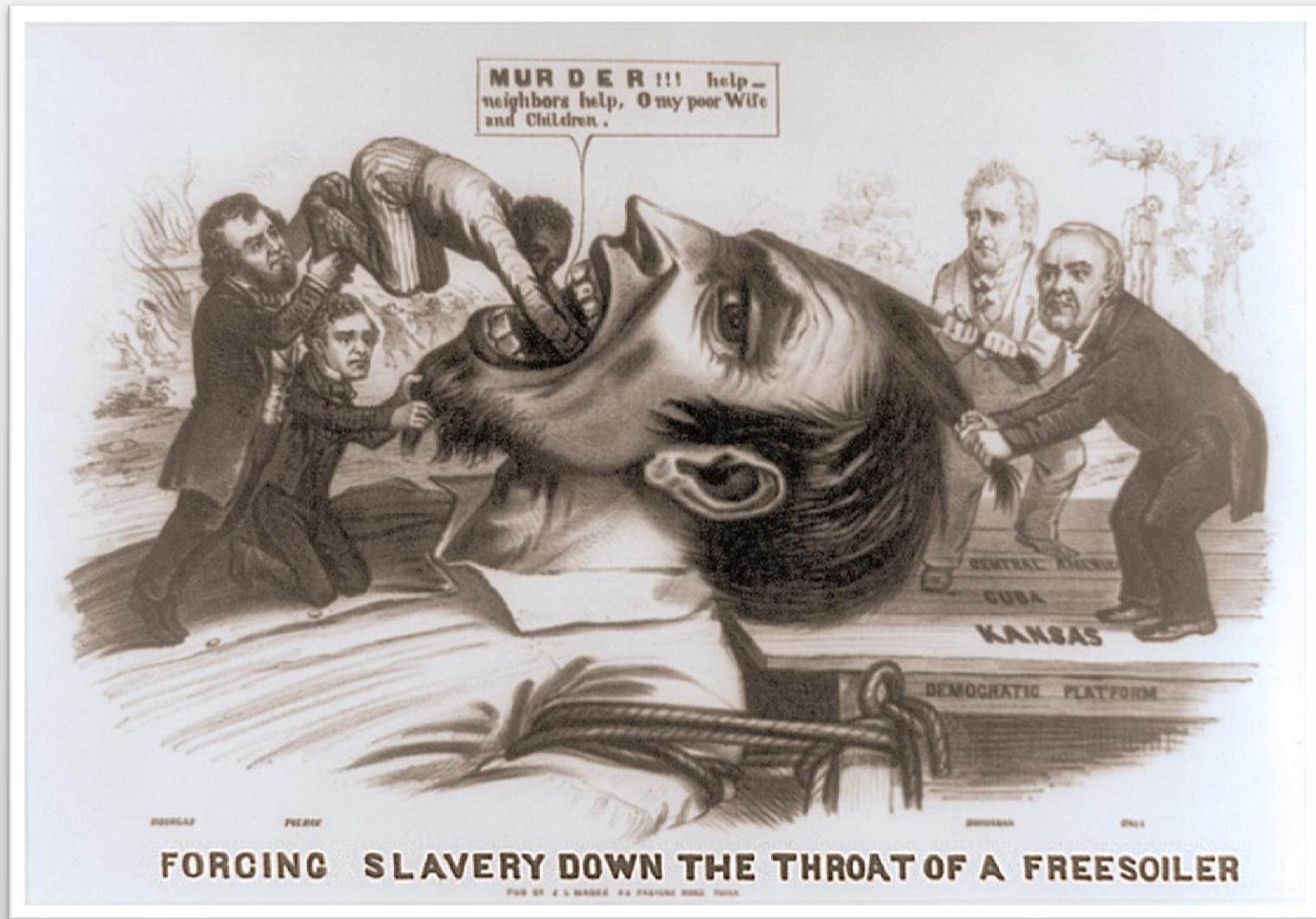
Compromise of 1850

- *California wanted to be a free state*
- *The South had assumed it wouldn't be and was upset it was*
- *As a compromise, California would enter the Union as a free state with the condition that Utah and New Mexico would vote on slavery*
- **Fugitive Slave Law** – *meant to appease South, many Northerners felt it turned them into slave-catchers*

Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854

- *Proposed by Stephen Douglas*
- *People in Nebraska Territory would vote on whether to have slavery or not (popular sovereignty).*
- *Sounded like a sound compromise, but it upset some anti-slavery forces*
- **Freesoilers** (poor farmers who couldn't compete with slave-owners), and pro-slavery forces streamed in
- *Mini civil war: "Bleeding Kansas"*

Political Cartoon, 1856



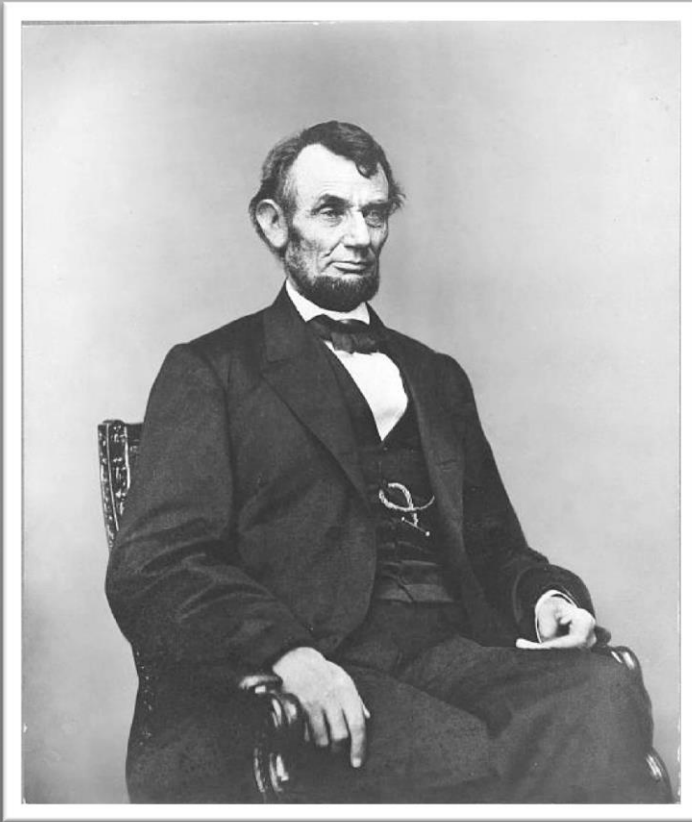
John Brown

- *Abolitionist*
- *Involved in the Underground Railroad*
- *Moved to Kansas to support the anti-slavery cause*
- *Responded to violence by pro-slavery men by organizing the murder of 5 proslavery settlers: Pottowatomie Creek Massacre*

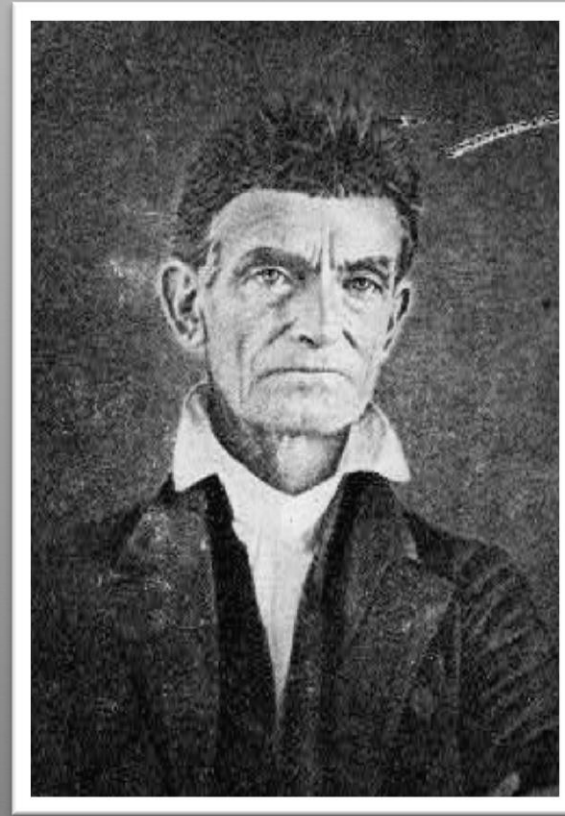
John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry

- *Brown planned a raid on a federal arsenal*
- *He wanted to distribute weapons to slaves*
- *Action failed. Brown and his men were mostly captured or killed within 36 hours*
- *Brown was ultimately hanged*

Abraham Lincoln called Brown a “misguided fanatic.”



Abraham Lincoln



John Brown

Central Historical Question:

*Was John Brown a
“misguided fanatic”?*