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As the Manifest Destiny and expansionism became more and more prominent in the mid-1800s, the issue of slavery was inflamed on new levels, and a question arose: should the institution spread along with the nation? The deep differences of opinion present at the time needed to be addressed, and the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska act had some part in trying to do so. Both inspired political actions: enacting popular sovereignty and the formation of the Republican party and further vitalized moral arguments: the simple inhumanity of slavery.

Both the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed for those who settled territories to, upon statehood, decide whether or not to allow slavery. This popular sovereignty inspired those opposed to slavery’s expansion, for they could use it to their advantage to vote down the allowance of the institution. The enacting of this by those who opposed is most prominent in the case of the Kansas-Nebraska act with Bleeding Kansas. Along with those from the other side of the issue, those against the expansion went to settle Kansas in great numbers hoping to use the political power of their votes to get their way. The result of the deluge of settlers from both sides was the near-war of Bleeding Kansas, for both sides were determined. Those adhered to the cause of stopping expansion were determined to do so no matter what by this new promise of popular sovereignty.

The Compromise of 1850, with the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Kansas-Nebraska act, which in effect repealed the Missouri Compromise, served to further the cause of opposition to slavery’s spread. This and the fortunate timing of the death of parties that carried many opposers led to the creation of a new major party: the Republicans. This party was quite a successful protest against land gains for slavery. It absorbed many from grew extremely rapidly and became a major contender for power, which could very well and did influence towards limiting slavery.

The threat of further spread and legalization of slavery brought about by both pieces of legislation readily brought about more moral arguments about the inhumanity of slavery. One notable piece of this, Uncle Tom’s Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stow, was a particular reaction to the Fugitive Slave Law of the Compromise of 1850, and it was perhaps one of the most potent of those produced by the abolitionists and such. It very successfully convinced many that the moral wrongness of the institution meant that it had to be stopped, at least from moving beyond where it currently existed. Many other such examples of the argument came forth as reactions to the unfavorable parts of the compromise and the act, which demonstrates the bringing forth of further fervor of the arguments.

The movement to prevent the spread of slavery to further territories used many moral and political arguments and actions to use their beliefs to the best influence. Popular sovereignty (while perhaps not always greatly effective), the formation of the Republican party, and the very public moral arguments as exemplified in Uncle Tom’s Cabin are all notable among these arguments and actions as prominent and often effective.