

*Study Outline*

**HISTORY  
OF THE  
AMERICAN  
NEGRO  
PEOPLE**

**1619 - 1918**

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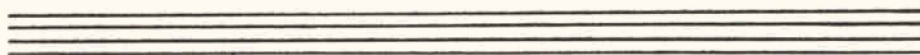
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the basis of a series of lectures  
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## I. THE AFRICAN BACKGROUND AND THE EARLY SLAVE TRADE

Studies based especially on excavations show that many parts of Africa had a high culture, in many respects higher than the culture of Europe, at the time of the European invasion.

The Negroes were the founders of civilization along the Ganges, the Euphrates, and the Nile Rivers. Early Babylon was founded by a Negroid people.

The highest and most developed of the African civilizations was around the Nile in Ethiopia. The cultural center of Ethiopia was the city of Meroe. Ethiopia and Egypt were probably the first of the higher human cultures. They were at first one country and mingled their cultures, but later they separated. They had contact with Greece, Rome, and Persia.

Some scientists claim that on the west coast of Africa a civilization was set up very much like that of ancient Rome, but prior to it.

The accomplishments of Africa up to the time of the invasions include:

Rock painting (still preserved); rhythmic music; imaginative and poetic folklore. By the bushmen of South Africa.

Domestication of animals by the Hottentots of South Africa.

Agriculture, and a system of exchange using cattle, sheep, or goats as the medium of circulation. By the Bantu of South Africa.

Gold and silver mining; trade in precious stones; building construction (houses and fortifications); pottery; metal work. By the peoples in the region of the Great Lakes.

Agricultural system, law, literature, music, natural sciences, medicine, and schooling system. In the kingdom of Songhay.

Cotton weaving in the Sudan (as early as the eleventh century).

Leaving consideration of separate portions of the continent and considering Africa as a whole, we may say that the Africans were at one time the greatest metal workers of the world; they were the first to smelt iron and use the forge. They were masters of the art of basketry, pottery, and cutlery. They made many contributions to dancing, music, and sculpture. According to some authorities, the stimulus to Greek art came from Africa.

The Negroes brought art and sculpture to prehistoric Europe. They invented many musical instruments, and created sculpture in brass, bronze, ivory, quartz, and granite. They also had a glass industry.

Writing was known in Egypt and Ethiopia and to some extent elsewhere in Africa. Over one hundred manuscripts of Ethiopian and Ethiopian-Arabic literature now exist. The Epic of the Sudan is considered by scholars as one of the world's greatest classics. The Africans also had a rich folklore and store of proverbs, and such tales as the Uncle Remus stories have grown out of this folklore.

Probably the most lasting and most important of the discoveries of ancient Africa was the smelting of iron, which Africa taught the rest of the world. Franz Boas says:

"It seems likely that at a time when the European was still satisfied with rude stone tools, the African had invented and adopted the art of smelting iron. Consider for a moment what this has meant for the advance of the human race. As long as the hammer, knife, the saw, drill, spade, and hoe had to

be chipped out of stone or had to be made of shell or hard wood, effective industry and work was not impossible, but difficult. A great progress was made when copper found in large nuggets was hammered out into tools and later on shaped by smelting, and when bronze was introduced; but the true advancement of industrial life did not begin until the hard iron was discovered. It seems not unlikely that the people who made the marvelous discovery of reducing iron ore by smelting were the African Negroes. Neither ancient Europe nor western Asia nor ancient China knew iron, and everything points to its introduction from Africa."

Governmental Forms: All Africa, like all other continents, was at one time in the state of primitive communism. At the time of the European invasion, many of the African peoples had developed into states having the form of limited monarchies. Many of these were based on a system of patriarchal slavery, similar in many respects to that of ancient Greece. Early slavery on the African continent was very mild. The slaves were members of the family, and often rose to high position in the tribe. They were the captives taken in war.

It is important to note that there is -- and was -- no African people, but a very large number of African peoples, differing in racial origin, in color, in average height, and other physical characteristics, and differing very greatly in cultural, economic, and political development. The main African tribes were the Hottentots, the Bushmen, the Pygmies, the Bantu, the Nigritians, the Fellatahs, and the Negritos. The main African kingdoms were Ethiopia, Songhay, Dahomey, Ghana, and Melle.

#### Invasion of Africa; Early Slave-Trade

The invasion of the African continent and the enslavement of Negroes was closely bound up with the development of feudalism in Europe, and the accumulation of merchant capital and the development of trade. By the fifteenth century, commercial capital was flowering in England and Europe; new trade routes and new trade areas were being sought feverishly by the leading mercantile nations. The search for new trade routes encouraged African coastal expeditions by the European powers. The development of trade brought the formation of the great trading companies, which found one of their most lucrative fields in the slave trade. Merchant capital was also instrumental in colonizing the western world, where virgin soil and a shortage of labor gave the greatest impetus to slavery and the slave trade. The chief invaders of Africa were precisely the great mercantile nations of the time: England, France, Holland, Spain, and Portugal.

The African continent, because of its flatness and lack of mountain barriers near the coast, was peculiarly accessible to invasion.

The slave-trade once begun, the slave-traders fomented inter-tribal wars and inter-tribal kidnaping so that more slaves would be taken. They helped into office and supported those native rulers who were willing to trade in slaves, and brought about the overthrow of those who resisted this policy. In the course of the slave-trade, most of the native culture of Africa was destroyed. The traders encouraged tyranny and made impossible further advances in culture.

The trade resulted in depopulation of the continent and the total disappearance of many tribes. About 25,000 Negroes a year reached America between 1698 and 1707. After 1713, about 30,000 were brought each year. During the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, probably about 15 million slaves were brought to America in all. Every slave who reached American shores represented approximately

five corpses in Africa or in the ocean. Africa lost about one hundred million people through the slave trade.

The Slave Traders: Mohammedans from Asia were the first to engage in the slave trade in Africa, in order to supply their harems and armies. At first, Africans enslaved were bought from their masters and used in war, as was the universal European custom at that time. Later, slaves were obtained by methods involving the enslavement and depopulation of large parts of Africa.

Portugal was the first nation to begin the trade, in the early 1400's. A regular trade in slaves was begun on the Guinea coast. The slaves were taken first to Europe, and then to the Spanish possessions in America.

Spain followed the example set by Portugal. Then England began to horn in. Then followed France, Holland, Denmark, and the American colonies. In America, Boston and Newport were especially active in trading in slaves. Newport maintained 22 rum distilleries to supply rum for the slave-traders.

There was much rivalry among the countries over the slave trade, and England finally got the commanding position. England and Holland fought two wars over dominance in the slave trade. So important did England consider this trade that she insisted on having a clause inserted in the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, whereby she was awarded for 33 years the exclusive right to transport slaves to the Spanish colonies in America.

The market for all these slaves was the American colonies of the European continent, at first especially the West Indies. Virgin country and shortage of labor, together with an almost exclusively agricultural economy in the new world and the plantation economy of the southern part of what is now the United States, were the reasons.

England granted charters to special companies for the traffic. This was displeasing to the merchants outside the companies, which were a sort of monopoly, and they brought pressure on Parliament, so in 1698 Parliament passed an act allowing private traders to participate in the slave trade, provided they paid ten percent duty on English goods exported to Africa.

The following is a quotation from the book, Man's Worldly Goods, by Leo Huberman:

"The first Englishman to conceive the idea that there was lots of money to be made by seizing unsuspecting Negroes in Africa, and selling them as 'raw material' to be worked to a quick death on plantations in the New World, was John Hawkins. 'Good Queen Bess' thought so much of the great work of this murderer and kidnaper that she knighted him after his second slave-trading expedition. It was, then, as Sir John Hawkins (who had chosen as his crest a Negro in chains) that he later proudly boasted of his exploits in this inhuman traffic. Here is Hakluyt's charming recital of Hawkins' account of his first voyage in 1562-63: 'And being amongst other particulars assured that Negroes were very good merchandise in Hispianola, and that a store of Negroes might easily be had upon the coast of Guinea, resolved with himself to make trial thereof, and communicated that devise with his worshipful friends of London...All which persons liked so well his intention, that they became liberal contributors and adventurers in the action. For which purpose there were three good ships immediately provided....From thence he passed to Sierra Leone, upon the coast of Guinea... where he stayed some good time, and got into his possession, partly by the sword and partly by other means, to the number of 300 Negroes at the least, besides other merchandise which that country yieldeth. With this prey he sailed over the Ocean... and (sold) the whole number of his Negroes; for

which he received...by way of exchange some quantity of merchandise, that he did not only lade his own three ships with hides, gingers, sugars, and some quantities of pearls, but he freighted also two other hulks...And so with prosperous success and much gain to himself and the aforesaid adventurers, he came home.'

"Queen Elizabeth was impressed with 'his prosperous success and much gain.' She wanted to be a partner to any profits in the future. So for his second expedition, the Queen loaned a ship to slave-trader Hawkins. The name of the ship was the Jesus."

Sources and Methods of the Slave Trade: The center of the early slave trade was the African coast, about 200 miles east of the Great Niger River. Negro slaves came from widely separated tribes, different in culture and physiognomy.

The European nations supported those chieftains and states which were committed to the slave trade, and assisted them against other chieftains and states opposed. The trade was carried on chiefly by procuring from a chieftain his prisoners of war, in exchange for cheap trinkets, calico, rum, etc., and also through kidnaping. But these methods alone took too long. Therefore white settlements were set up along the coast, to procure slaves and warehouse them until the traders' ships came in. These were called slave factories. Such colonies were planted by England, France, Holland, and Portugal.

The slaves were driven from the interior to the coast on foot, chained together in coffles. They were brought by forced marches, and the sick and exhausted were cut from the cofle and left on the wayside to die. Many died of hunger, thirst, and exhaustion on the way. On the ship, they were usually chained two and two, and made to crouch in a space about four feet high. The food was bad and limited and there was little water. The slaves were made to dance by the lash for exercise. Smallpox and ophthalmia (a disease of the eyes) were common. Slaves blinded by ophthalmia were thrown to the sharks. Captains of slavers counted on losing one-fourth of their slaves per voyage. The sailors on these slavers were often men who had to go, to get out of going to jail.

The traders got slaves in Africa for rum, sold them (especially at first) in the West Indies, got molasses in the West Indies, and went to New England to have the molasses made into rum. The trip with the slaves on board, from Africa to the West Indies, was known as the "middle passage."

The Slave Trade as a Source of Primitive Accumulation of Capital: The slave trade was one of the most important means whereby merchants got together enough money to set up as the first industrial capitalists.

Huberman's Man's Worldly Goods says:

"Particularly interesting as a source of capital accumulation was the trade in human beings, the black-skinned natives of Africa. In 1840, Professor H. Merivale delivered a series of lectures at Oxford on 'Colonization and Colonies.' In the course of one of these lectures he asked two important questions, and then gave an equally important answer: 'What raised Liverpool and Manchester from provincial towns to gigantic cities? What maintains now their ever active industry and their rapid accumulation of wealth? Their present opulence is as really owing to the toil and suffering of the Negro as if his hands had excavated their docks and fabricated their steam-engines.'

"Was Professor Merivale talking through his hat? He was not! He had probably read the petition to the House of Commons sent by the merchants of Liverpool in 1788, in answer to some misguided people who had the bad taste to suggest that the horrible trade in live human beings was unbecoming to a civilized



country; 'Your petitioners therefore contemplate with real concern the attempts now making... to obtain a total abolition of the African slave trade, which for a long series of years has constituted and still continues to form a very extensive branch of the commerce of Liverpool. Your petitioners humbly pray to be heard against the abolition of this source of wealth.'

Efforts to Abolish the Slave Trade: In the latter part of the eighteenth century, there was much revolutionary sentiment the world over, which naturally demanded the abolition of the slave trade. This sprang from the rise of the industrial bourgeoisie and its struggle against the commercial bourgeoisie, whose power rested in part on the slave trade. In England, in 1776, the motion was made in the House of Commons to abolish the trade. It was not carried. The foremost figures in the English movement against the trade were Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce. The slave trade was abolished by England in 1807.

The American colonists themselves made some efforts to abolish the slave trade, before the American revolution. But the English crown gave aid to the slave trade. Before 1772, Virginia passed 33 acts looking to the prohibition of the importation of slaves and in every case the act was disallowed by England.

Into the first draft of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson had written a clause which was stricken out at the request of Georgia and South Carolina; "He (meaning George III --ed.) has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the person of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where man should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative (abused his veto power--Ed.) for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce."

The Continental Congress in America made a general declaration against the import of slaves. Several colonies prohibited the slave trade about this time. By the terms of the Constitution, the slave trade was continued to 1808.

Many memorials came to Congress for the abolition of the slave trade, especially from the Quakers.

There was a division of interest on this question on the part of the planters themselves, which led to an agreement to abolish the slave trade. The border states early became slave-breeders, and African competition was unwelcome to them. The slave-owners were anxious to hold the loyalty of these border states. Furthermore, the wealthiest slave-owners, who already had considerable slave property, were not anxious to lower the value of their slaves by fresh imports.

The slave trade to America was not actually abolished after 1808, but continued illegally, especially in the years just before the Civil War.

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References: Carter G. Woodson; The Negro in Our History. 1927 Edition. Chapters I, II, III, IV.

W.E.B. DuBois; The Negro, Chapter VIII.

Supplementary: W.E.B. DuBois; Suppression of the African Slave Trade.

## II. BEGINNINGS OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA

The First Negroes: The first Negroes were brought to the colonies in 1619, and were landed at Jamestown, Virginia. There were twenty of these, and they were brought by Dutch traders. Their status -- slaves or indentured servants -- has been a matter of dispute among historians. It now seems probable that they were not brought as slaves, but, like many whites, as indentured servants, and that slavery for the Negroes was a later development.

Slavery and indenture: The status of servitude, or indenture, was recognized for the Indians, whites, and Negroes in early colonial days. The origin of white indenture is as follows:

Beginning with the 15th and 16th centuries, there took place in England the process of enclosure of the land of the peasants. The feudal nobility drove the peasants off the land in order to turn the land into sheep-walks. This was because of the rapid rise of the Flemish wool manufactures, and the rise in the price of wool in England. It became more profitable to have sheep on the land than to have peasants. These peasants were set to wandering the roads, and were punished for their failure to work (although they had no work) through the stringent vagrancy laws passed at this time. Many of these ex-peasants wanted to go to America, but were too poor to pay for transport. Many others, both from the city and country, left as an alternative to going to prison under the vagrancy and debtors' laws. Instead of paying transport, they agreed to work a certain number of years in America to pay off the cost of their passage.

There was also much kidnaping of young boys and girls from England and Europe to be sent as indentured servants to America.

These indentured servants were purchased by colonial planters and merchants, and served from five to ten years. The most usual indenture period was five to seven years. The servant could sue in court, but could not vote, hold office, or bear arms.

The first Negroes brought to the colonies were, in all probability, considered indentured servants. Gradually their status became one of perpetual service. For instance, in Virginia, the act which first gave legal recognition to slavery (1661) said that Negroes were "incapable of making satisfaction for time lost in running away, by addition of time." This differentiated Negro from white indentured servants, and made them slaves for life. Thus we see how the legalized institution, as usual, followed the actual fact.

With "permanent indenture" or slavery, the slaves lost their civil, juridical, and marital rights. Then the children of two slaves were made slaves for life. Then the question arose concerning the status of children whose fathers were free. The decision was that children followed the ownership of the mother, like the offspring of any other animal.

Gradually, fairly uniform slave codes grew up, and the slaves lost all civil and personal rights of citizenship.

Colonial assemblies one after the other recognized the status of slavery in legislative acts, and thus legalized it.

The Massachusetts legislature recognized slavery in 1641; Connecticut in 1650; Rhode Island in 1652; Maryland in 1663-64. In New York, slavery began under Dutch rule and continued under English. About 1650 the Dutch West India

Company brought Negro slaves to New Netherlands. In 1665, slavery was recognized by legislation. Slavery was recognized in South Carolina in 1682; in New Hampshire in 1714; in North Carolina in 1715; in Delaware in 1721. In Pennsylvania, slavery was recognized but much restricted. Georgia was a debtors' colony and slavery was forbidden there at first. The white men of Georgia were supposed to be an English outpost against the Spanish colonies on the South. However, in 1749, at the insistence of planters, slavery was recognized. It had existed illegally before that time.

It is necessary to note that slavery in America at this period was primarily domestic slavery, as house servants, etc. This slavery was of a more or less patriarchal character. American slavery did not assume its horrible forms until the period when the South became a commodity-producing region, exporting cotton. (See Chapter IV.)

### III. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION; THE CONSTITUTION

#### 1. Participation of Negroes in the American Revolution

Crispus Attucks was an acknowledged leader of the colonists in the struggle with the British soldiers in Boston known as the Boston massacre, March 5, 1770. He was the first to fall when the soldiers fired on the citizens protesting mistreatment of the townspeople. He was, therefore, the first martyr of the American revolution (see article attached).

Many Negroes served as minutemen during the early stages of the revolution. The minutemen were a sort of impromptu peoples' militia, to protect tax evaders, provide arms to colonists, etc. The most prominent of these was Lemuel Haynes.

Enlistment of Negroes in the Continental Army: There was at first some opposition to Negroes being enlisted. The Massachusetts Committee of Safety protested their being in the army. Washington, taking command at Cambridge, prohibited the enlistment of Negroes. The Continental Congress instructed Washington to discharge all Negroes, free and slave. Massachusetts excluded Indians and Negroes from its militia. The Massachusetts Committee of Safety resolved not to use Negroes in any campaign against the British, as this would "reflect dishonor on the American colonies." This is a reflection of the many-sided class character of the revolutionary forces of the time.

In 1775, Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, offered to free all slaves who fought in the British ranks. Twenty-five thousand Negroes went over to the British in South Carolina, and Georgia lost about three-fourths of her Negroes to the British forces. Washington, therefore, revoked the order prohibiting enlistment of Negroes.

The records of every one of the original thirteen colonies show that each had colored troops. Washington, in desperate straits at Valley Forge, enlisted a battalion of Negroes from Rhode Island, all slaves to be freed upon enlistment.

At least 4,000 Negroes served in the Continental Army, some in special regiments, but most side by side with the whites. A Hessian officer observed in 1777: "...no regiment is to be seen (among the Americans) in which there are not Negroes in abundance, and among them there are able-bodied, strong, and brave fellows."

## Negroes who especially distinguished themselves in the Continental Army;

Peter Salem; Born in Framingham, Mass.; slave until he joined the army as a private; became the hero of the battle of Bunker Hill. At a crucial moment of the advance of the British forces under Major Pitcairn, he killed Pitcairn and thus helped to stop the advance.

Salem Poore; Fought in the battles of Savannah and Charleston, and received regimental honors, fourteen American commanders commending him to the Continental Congress.

Austin Dabney; Was a slave. Showed bravery in so many battles that the people of Georgia honored him with a tract of land, and the government pensioned him.

Other Battles in Which Negroes Distinguished Themselves; Peter Salem was not the only Negro hero of the battle of Bunker Hill, since other Negroes at the same battle rescued Major Samuel Lawrence of the American forces when he was in danger of capture.

Battle of Monmouth; Negroes were in the regiment with the whites; their names were placed on the pension rolls side by side with those of the other soldiers. The historian Bancroft said of the battle of Monmouth: "Nor may history omit to record that of the revolutionary patriots who on that day offered their lives for their country, more than 700 black men fought side by side with the whites."

In the battle of Rhode Island, 1781, one of the most severe battles of the war, a black regiment, under the command of Colonel Green, distinguished itself against the Hessians, in spite of terrific losses.

Negro soldiers sacrificed their lives at the battle of Points Bridge, 1781, in attempting to save Colonel Green, who was captured and murdered.

Speaking of the troops who took part in the battle of Long Island, a veteran, Dr. Harris, said: "Had they been unfaithful or even given way before the enemy, all would have been lost. Three times in succession they were attacked with more desperate valor and fury by well-trained disciplined troops and three times did they successfully repel the assault, and thus preserved our army from capture."

## 2. Anti-Slavery Sentiment in the Revolutionary Period

Most of the leaders of the American Revolution were outspoken in their denunciation of slavery. Chief among those who expressed anti-slavery sentiments were Benjamin Franklin, James Otis, Thomas Jefferson, Tom Paine, John Adams, and Lafayette. (See Chapter I on first draft of the Declaration of Independence.)

During the revolutionary epoch, the slaves made many gains. Many (though not all) who fought in the army were freed. The black codes were moderated, and laws making manumission easier were passed in most of the colonies. Slavery was abolished in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Many Negroes could vote at this period, even in southern states, and some held office.

The Northwest Ordinance; In 1787, the Continental Congress excluded slavery

forever from the Northwest Territory, the first territory of the country outside the original thirteen colonies. However, provisions were made for the recapture of fugitives who fled to that territory. The Ordinance stated: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted; provided always that any person escaping into the same from whom labor or service is lawfully due may be reclaimed and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service as aforesaid."

### 3. Other Outstanding Negroes of the Period

Besides Crispus Attucks and Peter Salem, other outstanding Negroes of the period were Phyllis Wheatley and Benjamin Banneker. Phyllis Wheatley was a slave in a Boston family and became known as a poet. Banneker was a freed Negro of Maryland, a student of science and mathematics, who became a noted astronomer and mathematician. He was the first American to make a clock, and he published one of the first series of almanacs in the United States. He was a member of the commission that laid out the city of Washington.

### 4. Slavery in the American Constitution

(This to be preceded by a brief discussion of the general nature of the Constitution)

The early struggle between slavery and anti-slavery showed itself in the Constitutional Convention. As a result of the insistence of the representatives of the slave states, the Constitution, although it nowhere contained the word "slave", had four provisions which were a concession to the slave-owning states. These were:

a. Equal representation for all states in the Senate. The slave states, knowing that the free states were outstripping them in population and would continue to do so, wanted to keep control of the Senate. That is why each state was assigned two Senators.

b. The three-fifths clause, which allowed the slave states to count  $\frac{3}{5}$  of their slaves in determining their representation in the House of Representatives. These slaves, of course, could not vote. This is Article I, Section II, of the Constitution: "Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons."

c. Continuation of the slave trade. Article I, Section 9: "The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by Congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed, not exceeding ten dollars on each person."

d. Fugitive-slave clause. Article IV, Section 2: "No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

Reference: Carter Woodson: The Negro in Our History, 1927 Edition, Chapter VIII.

Supplementary: Journal of Negro History, Volume I, pp. 110-131.

## RUNAWAY SLAVE LEADER OF BOSTON PATRIOTS AGAINST BRITISH

Monument Honors Him for Courageous Fight in 1770

By Elizabeth Lawson (From the Daily Worker)

"I place this Crispus Attucks in the foremost ranks of the men that dared. When we talk of courage, he rises, with his dark face, in his clothes of the laborer, his head uncovered, his arms raised above him defying bayonets; and when the proper symbols are placed around the base of the statue of Washington, one corner will be filled by the colored man defying the British muskets." -- From a speech by Wendell Phillips, in Faneuil Hall, March 5, 1858, in commemoration of the Boston massacre.

Seven armed men-of-war from Halifax landed two regiments of British troops in Boston harbor in October 1768. Amid the silence of the crowds lining the wharves and streets, the troops marched to the Common, and Boston became a garrisoned town. The General Court, the Council, and the Boston selectmen refused to billet the soldiers. The civil magistrates were well able to protect life and property, the citizens declared, and the troops had been sent only to collect the unjust revenues and to overawe the people.

The 14th and 29th regiments took up quarters in private buildings, at the expense of the Crown. They planted two cannon on King Street, with muzzles pointing to the Town House. They swaggered drunkenly through the city, their bayonets drawn. They broke into homes and warehouses in search of articles brought in without payment of duty.

The citizens of Boston called, unceasingly, for the removal of the troops. They barricaded warehouse doors and defied British officers who came to search.

On March 2, 1770, there were fights between local workmen and the soldiers of the 29th regiment. The troops, on the afternoon of March 5, posted the following handbill:

"Boston, Monday ye 5th, 1770.

"This is to inform ye Rebellious People of Boston that ye soljers in ye 14th and 29th Regiments are determined to joine together and defend themselves against all who shall oppose them. Signed Ye Soljers of ye 14th and 29th

Regiments."

The night of March 5 was frosty; there had been a light snowfall during the day, and the pavements were thinly coated with ice. An unusual number of people wandered about the streets; soldiers with cutlasses, and eyeing them, groups of men and boys carrying sticks and canes. There were several encounters: a barber's apprentice taunted a British soldier; the soldier struck the boy a blow with his musket. A crowd gathered before the headquarters of the 14th Regiment, known as Murray's Barracks, and pelted soldiers outside with snowballs. The British officers ordered their men indoors.

Among the leaders of the fight at Murray's Barracks was a black man, about 47 years old, Crispus Attucks, then working as a sailor on Captain Folger's whaleship from Nantucket. He had been born in Framingham, Mass., a slave. On October 2, 1750, there had appeared in the Boston Gazette and Weekly Journal this notice:

"Ran away from his master, William Brown of Framingham, on the 30th of September last, a mullato fellow about 27 years of age, named Crispus, six feet and two inches high, short curled hair....Whoever shall take up said runaway and convey him to his aforesaid Master shall have ten pounds old tenor Reward, and all necessary charges paid. And all masters of vessels and others are hereby cautioned against concealing or carrying off said servant on penalty of the law."

To return to 1770, the night of March 5. When the soldiers of the 14th Regiment retired into the barracks, Crispus Attucks gathered a crowd of sailors in Dock Square and addressed them. Someone cried: "To the main guard -- that's the nest." Led by Attucks, the men and boys poured into King Street, where the main body of British troops was stationed. Meanwhile, someone had lifted a small boy through a window into the Old Brick Meeting House to ring the bell. The throngs in the streets increased. A man recognized the soldier who had earlier in the evening assaulted the barber's apprentice, and the citizens attacked him with snowballs and sticks.

Suddenly, shoving his way through the crowd, appeared Captain Preston, officer of the guard for the day, and a file of seven soldiers, pricking the citizens with their bayonets. The order was given to the soldiers to prime and load. The crowd pressed up to the muzzles of the guns, struck the bayonets with sticks, and threw snow in the soldiers' faces, daring them to shoot. Without warning, one of the soldiers brought his gun to his shoulder and fired, and then, in quick succession, the other six discharged their muskets.

The first to fall was Crispus Attucks, the Negro, with two bullets in his breast. Samuel Gray, a rope-maker, and James Caldwell, a sailor, were also killed instantly. Samuel Maverick, apprentice to a joiner, died next day; Patrick Carr, who worked for a leather-breeches maker, died nine days later.

The church bells began to ring; hundreds poured into the streets; and the Lieutenant-Governor arrived to order the troops to their quarters.

At an immense townsmeeeting held on March 6, the people demanded the immediate withdrawal of both regiments; they remained in the meeting all day until word came that the troops had been ordered out of the city.

The bodies of Crispus Attucks and James Caldwell, who had no homes in Boston, lay in state in Faneuil Hall. On March 8, to the tolling of bells, the two coffins were carried to the spot of the massacre, where they were joined by the coffins of Maverick and Gray. Together the four hearses proceeded to the Granary Burying-Ground, followed by a procession of citizens marching six deep. The four martyrs were laid in one grave.

Two of the soldiers, including the murderer of Attucks, were convicted of manslaughter and branded in the hand. Their attorney, in his address to the court, unintentionally helped to preserve for Crispus Attucks his proper place in history. "This Attucks," he declaimed satirically, "appears to have undertaken to be the hero of the night, and to lead this army with banners, to form them in the first place in Dock Square and march them up King Street. Attucks with his myrmidons comes 'round Jackson's corner; when the soldiers pushed the people off, this man with his party cried, do not be afraid of them! To have this reinforcement coming down under the command of a stout mulatto fellow, what had not the soldiers then to fear?"

For more than a century a slavery-ridden republic denied a monument to Crispus Attucks and his fellow-martyrs. Finally, in 1888, a shaft of Concord granite was erected on Boston Common. On the face of the pedestal is a

bas-relief representing the massacre; Crispus Attucks lies in the foreground. In the upper right-hand corner appear the words of John Adams: "On that night, the foundation of American independence was laid."

On King Street, at the spot of the massacre, another monument stands. Carved on its base are the words:

"Long as in Freedom's cause the wise contend,  
Dear to your Country shall your fame extend;  
While to the world the lettered stone shall tell,  
Where Caldwell, Attucks, Gray, and Maverick fell."

#### IV. THE SLAVE SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES

##### 1. The Economics of Slavery

Inventions leading to cheapening of cotton production and textile manufacture, and therefore to an increased demand for cotton:

1768, Richard Arkwright perfected the spinning frame. In 1764, James Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny. In 1779, Samuel Crompton invented the spinning mule, and in the same year steam power was applied to cotton-spinning. In 1793, the cotton gin, which separated the seed from the lint, was invented by Eli Whitney. Whitney was an American; other inventors here listed were English.

Why slavery was profitable in the South and not in the North: A virgin continent and a shortage of labor combined to bring about the introduction of slavery into the United States. Slaves were introduced into the North as well as into the South, but the system did not flourish above the Mason's and Dixon's Line, and was soon abolished. It is important to understand why.

The slave owners often advanced the climate of the South as an argument for slavery, maintaining that white men could not work in such heat, and that, on the other hand, the only reason for the abolition of slavery in the North was that its climate was unsuited to the Negroes. Yet white men, women, and children by the thousands did work in the South, and Negroes flourished in the North and Canada.

It was chiefly the nature of the crops that could be grown, which in turn were dependent upon geographical conformation and climate, that determined whether slavery was to take root or to die. A crop that can be raised on farms of great size, stretching over many miles of flat land; that requires labor of little training and skill; and that gives year-round employment, is the ideal crop for slavery. The soil of the North called for intensive rather than extensive culture; to this task, free labor was adapted. Wheat, raised chiefly in the Northwest, requires, as is known, a seasonal labor force. Both cotton and tobacco are adaptable to cultivation by large gangs, under centralized supervision; they can be raised with labor of little skill; they provide almost year-round employment, and utilize the work not only of men, but of women and children as well. Neither soil, geographical conformation, nor climate permitted the cultivation of cotton in the North. In the mountainous regions of the South itself, the slave system never took hold.



Further, the organization of agrarian economy in the South -- the plantation with its feudal forms -- was well adapted to slavery. This agrarian economy was established in colonial days, when planters received enormous grants of land from the French and English kings.

Slave labor was not suitable for manufacturing in the North -- or in the South either. Manufacture requires a degree of skill and understanding which masters dared not permit their slaves to acquire in any great numbers. The North solved the labor shortage by large-scale immigration.

American slavery was a hybrid of two economic systems, the ancient slave and the modern capitalist system, and it combined the worst features of both. It was a slave system set down in the midst of a commodity-producing society. That is, American slavery had all the legal forms of slavery -- life enslavement, lack of civil and political rights, etc. -- of the ancient slavery. At the same time, unlike the ancient slavery, it drove the slaves to the utmost. This was because, in ancient slavery, with few exceptions, the slaves were producing not commodities (articles for sale on the market), but simply a certain amount of surplus products which their masters then utilized for themselves. However, since the possibility of consumption by an individual and his family is limited, the desire for extra labor from the slaves was also limited.

Under American slavery, however, the slaves were producing a commodity (cotton, tobacco, etc.) which was sold for money on a world market. Hence, the desire for more and more labor to produce more and more cotton, etc., was not limited by the limitations of the personal consumption of the American slave owners. It was this peculiarity of American slavery that led Marx to speak of it as "the meanest and most shameless form of man's enslaving in the annals of history." In Capital Marx says as follows:

"Surplus labor was not a new discovery made by capital. Whenever a part of society has a monopoly of the means of production, the worker, whether free or slave, must supplement the labor time necessary for his own maintenance by surplus labor time in which he produces the means of subsistence for the owner of the means of production. It is obvious, however, that when a society is so constructed that, from the economic viewpoint, the use value of products predominates over their exchange value, surplus labor is restricted within a smaller or larger circle of wants, and that in such a society, an unquenchable thirst for surplus labor cannot arise as the direct outcome of the very nature of the method of production. For this reason, overwork in ancient days became horrible only when the aim was to gain exchange value in its independent form by the production of gold and silver. Such conditions were exceptional in the ancient world. As soon, however, as people under whom production still takes the lower form of slave labor, serf labor, and the like are attracted within the domain of the world market dominated by the capitalist method of production the civilized horrors of overwork are grafted on to the barbaric horrors of slavery. In the southern states of the American Union, Negro slavery had a moderate and patriarchal character, so long as production was mainly carried on for the satisfaction of the immediate needs of the slave owners. But in proportion as the export of cotton grew to be a vital interest of the slave states, overwork became a factor in a calculated and calculating system, so that in many places it was 'good business' to use up the Negroes' lives in seven years. No longer did the slave owner aim merely at getting a certain quantity of useful products out of the work of his slaves. He now wanted to extract surplus labor itself."

Inefficiency of the slave system; political consequences: Swift exhaustion of the soil was one of the most outstanding facts of slave cultivation. Long before the Civil War, the older sections of Maryland and Virginia, the fertility of their lands hopelessly destroyed, had in large part abandoned agriculture and become slave breeders for the rest of the South and the Southwest.

Slave labor was of necessity unskilled labor. Because the masters dared not permit the majority of slaves to learn, they could give them only the coarsest tools, which eliminated the possibility of using the more complex instruments that made their way rapidly into the northern and northwestern farms. The value of farm implements on the average thousand acre plantation was well under \$500. Rotation of crops was impossible, for that required a more versatile labor force than the slaves provided; furthermore, agriculture, dependent for finances on northern bankers, who wanted to be sure of returns, could not risk innovations. The process of erosion, caused chiefly by lack of vegetation over large areas of abandoned land, and by the practice of plowing year after year in the same furrow, had begun its destructive work in slavery times. Also, most capital investment had to be in slaves and land, and there was little or none for machinery and rationalizations.

Scientific agriculture (rotation of crops, use of farm machinery, etc.) was characteristic of the small free farms of the northern and western states; the South with its slaves could no more than scratch the surface, and move on. Slavery must expand or die. This is the basic explanation of the South's aggressive role in national politics, its constant demand for more and more territory. It was for this reason that the South finally resorted to Civil War, after the election to power of a party which was pledged against the further extension of the slave system.

American slavery was a debtor system. The profits of American slaveholders were at once reinvested in more slaves and more land. For financing, most plantations depended on outside aid, chiefly from northern and English banks. Nowhere else in America was the year's income so largely spent before it was even received. This is the explanation of the political tie-up between Wall Street and other northern financial centers, and English commercial centers, with the slave-owning South.

Concentration of ownership in the slave system: In the entire United States, in 1850, only two planters owned 1,000 slaves or more; only nine owned from 500 to 1000. A majority of the slaveholders had less than five slaves each, and about four million people in the South owned no slaves whatever. Here is the classification of slave holders according to the census of 1850:

Holders of one slave, and less than 5	174,502
Holders of five slaves, and less than 10	60,765
Holders of ten slaves, and less than 20	54,595
Holders of 20 slaves, and less than 50	29,733
Holders of 50 slaves, and less than 100	6,196
Holders of 100 slaves, and less than 200	1,479
Holders of 200 slaves, and less than 300	187
Holders of 300 slaves, and less than 500	56
Holders of 500 slaves, and less than 1,000	9
Holders of 1,000 slaves or more	2

Even this picture is far too favorable. The pro-slavery government classified slave hirers as slaveholders, and counted twice those planters who

owned slaves in two counties. It is reliably estimated that the number of slave holders in 1850 was not more than 186,000.

Price of slaves: This rose constantly. The price of an able-bodied adult male Negro was:

1700 -- \$125-200                      1800 -- \$300-400                      1850 -- \$1200-1800

Effect of slavery on southern industry: Industry was almost negligible below the Mason - Dixon line. Plantation economy was self-devouring. The planters, whose profits were at once reinvested in more slaves and more land, had no funds to put into factories and mines. Neither did they welcome the investment of northern capital in southern industry. The slave-owners had nothing to gain from southern industrial development, and they feared the growth in their midst of a capitalist class and a white proletariat, classes which would inevitably challenge their domination. To use Negro slaves in industry was as impossible as to use them in scientific agriculture. Almost every manufactured article used in the South was imported from the North and from England. To preserve the slave system; it was necessary to bar industry from the South.

Effect of slavery on industry and markets: Today there is a tendency to distortion of the realities of the slave system by historians and novelists. American slavery is made to appear as a paternalistic system under which the slaves were well cared for. This picture is incorrect.

The argument is made that since the slaves were property, the masters found it to their interest to preserve the slaves' health, and never to drive them to exhaustion. This was the favorite thesis of the slave owners in their clashes with the Abolitionists. To travelers in the South, the untruth of the claim was a source of never-ending astonishment. Frederick Law Olmsted, as correspondent for the New York Times, made extended journeys of observation throughout the cotton kingdom; his articles furnished a complete refutation of the idea that slave life was tenderly nurtured. "As property," Olmsted wrote, "Negro life and Negro vigor were much less carefully economized than I had always before imagined them to be." How could it profit the slave owner to work his slaves lightly, extracting from them less than the maximum of labor, so that the slaves might live to a ripe old age in which they could do no work and in which, therefore, the cost of their maintenance would be a total loss? Again, if the slaves were so well cared for -- better, the slave owners contended, than free laborers-- how account for the fact that the death rate among Negroes was, during the entire period of slavery, higher than the death rate among whites?

Planters' meetings were known to have discussed the business problem of whether the slave was more profitable when worked lightly, or when exhausted in a decade. The feeling of the planters favored the latter alternative. The domestic slave trade, the systematic breeding of slaves for market, and the import of fresh slaves from Africa -- for, although the foreign trade was illegal after 1808, it was never discontinued -- made it possible to recruit new forces with little difficulty. J. E. Cairnes wrote in his excellent book, The Slave Power; "Considerations of economy which, under a rational system, afford some security for humane treatment by identifying the master's interest with the slaves' preservation, when once trading in slaves is practiced, become reasons for racking to the uttermost the toil of the slave; for, when his life can be at once supplied, the duration of his life becomes a matter of less moment than

its productiveness while it lasts. It is a maxim of slave management in slave-importing countries, that the most effective economy is that which takes out of the human chattel in the shortest space of time, the utmost amount of exertion it is capable of putting forth."

Hours of labor were from daylight to dark. This means that the slaves often got up at four in the morning so as to be in the fields by light, and did not return home until nine in the evening.

In the Louisiana sugar plantations, it was the acknowledged custom to work off the "hands" every seven years. The grinding season lasts for only two or three months, during which it was essential to exert the utmost labor to secure the product of the year. It was necessary either to push the slaves by day and night at this time, or to support a double set the year round.

Planters (and most of today's historians) said that the slaves were at least assured of full bellies. This argument was not true. Full-grown men and women working in the fields received as their monthly allowance eight pounds of pickled pork or its equivalent in fish, one bushel of Indian meal, and one pound of salt.

A report of the Secretary of the Treasury of the U.S., published in 1846 and compiled from questionnaires returned by planters, estimated the cost of food and clothing for working hands at \$30 per year. These were the estimates of sugar planters, who exaggerated their costs in order to secure a continuation of the sugar tariff. The yearly expense of maintaining a slave was thus about the same as the monthly expense of day laborers in the South; it was also approximately \$20 less than the yearly sum allotted for the care of non-working inmates of the poorhouses of New York State.

Cruelty to slaves: All punishments of slaves were legal. The advertisements which owners of fugitives inserted in newspapers are instructive on this point. The following from the Charleston Courier of 1825 is by no means exceptional: "Twenty dollars reward. Ran away from the subscriber, on the 14th instant, a negro girl named Molly. She is 16 or 17 years of age, slim made, lately branded on her left cheek, thus 'R', and a piece is taken off her left ear on the same side; the same letter is branded on the inside of both her legs." Advertisements commonly mentioned marks left by the lash as a means of identification.

Southern law provided punishment for the murder or maiming of slaves, but such statutes were directed chiefly against the poor whites. The laws invariably contained modifying clauses which exempted masters from their operation. A Virginia court, in pronouncing on the case of a cruel master, said: "It is the policy of the law, in respect to the relation of master and slave, for the sake of securing proper subordination on the part of the slave, to protect the master from prosecution in all such cases, even if the whipping and punishment be malicious, cruel, and excessive." Further, the slave could not testify against the master.

It is said that slaves and Negroes generally were not lynched before the Civil War. Yet there are on record, in the decade 1850-60, 38 lynchings of slaves. These are merely the known, verified, and recorded instances of lynching. The proportion of reported to actual lynchings was no doubt very small.

Civil rights of slaves: Negro testimony was inadmissible against whites. Slaves

could make no contracts; could own nothing; could not legally marry; could not appeal from their masters; and could be punished at will. The offense of assault and battery could not be committed on the person of a slave. On the other hand, no slave might raise his hand against a white man except in defense of his master's interests. The rape of a female slave was not a crime, but a trespass on the property of the master.

All this has more than mere historical interest. The laws and customs of the slave plantation live today in the Jim-Crow laws and customs of the South.

Beginnings of the Negro nation: Under slavery, the Negro people in America already acquired some of the characteristics of a nation.

First, a common territory. By 1860, there had grown up a well-defined cotton belt (practically identical with the slave belt) which in its outline is about the same as the Black Belt today -- that is, the area in which the Negro people are a majority.

Second, the slaves, coming originally from many parts of Africa and speaking many different languages, learned a common language -- English.

Third, they acquired a common culture and common traditions -- the slave insurrections, slave songs and spirituals, etc.

#### V. GENERAL VIEW OF MAIN EVENTS OF AMERICAN HISTORY, 1820 TO 1860, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO SLAVERY

Marx said of America, that the question of slavery was "the moving power of its history for half a century." This half century may be considered as the period from 1820 to 1877. The question of slavery -- or, more correctly, the question of slavery expansion -- was during this period the chief consideration in determining national policy, both internal and foreign. The period of 1820 to the Civil War was a period of growing antagonism between the free-labor system of the North and the slave-labor system of the South. The direct cause of the antagonism was the struggle over possession of the western territories.

The free-labor system of the North was expanding during these frontier years. This involved a movement westward, from the North, of capital, labor, and the free, independent farmers. Marx puts great stress on the importance to national developments, economically and politically, of the free, independent farmers of the Northwest. Free land in the Northwest was the ambition of thousands of small farmers and eastern factory workers and artisans.

The slave system also, however, was under the necessity of constant expansion. The reasons for this have already been given in the discussion of slavery in the United States. To repeat briefly:

The South, with its wasteful, unscientific agriculture by slave labor, could do no more than scratch the surface, and move on. Slavery must expand or die. This is the basic explanation of the South's aggressive role in national politics, its constant demand for more territory. It was for this reason that the South finally resorted to Civil War, after the election to power of a party (the Republican) pledged against further extension of the slave system.

At the founding of the nation, slavery was considered to be an institution limited to its already existing territory, and doomed to gradual extinction. Between this time and the 1820's, when slavery's first act of territorial aggression took place, a number of inventions came into use (spinning jenny, spinning mule, cotton-gin, etc.) which led to a cheapening of cotton production and a world-wide demand for cotton. This created a desire on the part of the slavocracy, for territorial expansion.

The main events of American history up to the period of the Civil War, all of which were inextricably bound up with the slavery question, were as follows:

### 1. The Missouri Compromise of 1820.

The Louisiana purchase was made from France in 1803. This added considerable territory to the original thirteen states. In 1818, a portion of the territory, known as Missouri, asked for admission to the Union, having acquired sufficient population to be made a state. The question of admission came up in Congress. One of the representatives from New York proposed an amendment to the bill to admit Missouri. The amendment provided that further introduction of slaves into the territory be prohibited, and that slaves already there should be gradually freed. This aroused a storm of controversy, which was finally solved by admitting Missouri as a slave state, Maine as a free state, and setting the line of 36-30 N. latitude to the extension of slavery. No slaves were to be introduced north of that territory. This was generally understood as applying only to the Louisiana territory, but not to territory further west which might some day come into our possession. The compromise was reached in 1820. Under it, Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana were admitted as slave states. The Missouri Compromise was not strictly a compromise, but rather a first aggression of slavery. It added slave territory to the original seven slave states.

### 2. The Annexation of Texas.

Texas belonged to Mexico and slavery was forbidden there by the Mexican constitution. Some slaveholders went there -- and obtained land grants corruptly from local bodies which had no competency to make them. They brought in slaves on 99-year apprenticeship to evade the law against slavery. Mexico then passed a law annulling all indentures over ten years. Then the slave holders deliberately hatched an insurrection, bringing in filibusterers from border states. Texas asserted its independence and was recognized by the United States and was annexed in 1845. It became a regularly organized state in 1846. By this, an immense territory was added, which, it was hoped, would be cut up into five states. The advantage to the slave power of such a division would be that it would obtain ten pro-slavery senators instead of two. But the large influx into Texas of working-class whites, many of them of German origin, prevented this. The slave holders realized that cutting up Texas would create, not additional slave states, but additional free states.

### 3. The Mexican War.

In 1845, the United States asked Mexico to allow it to purchase New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. Mexico refused to sell. The United States then picked a dispute over a question of the Texas boundary, and made this the excuse to order troops to the Rio Grande. The Mexicans resisted this invasion of their territory, and the United States declared war. The progressive forces, including Lincoln, then a Congressman from Illinois, denounced this war. The masses of northern people also denounced it for what it was, a slave holders' crusade. A convention of New England workers at Lynn, Mass., in 1846, resolved

that workers should not support it.

The war began in 1846 and ended in 1848. By it, an immense territory -- 800,000 square miles -- was added to the country, including California, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada.

During the course of the war, in 1846, a member from Pennsylvania, David Wilmot, introduced into the House of Representatives a proviso to the bill for appropriations for the war. This became known as the Wilmot proviso. It was to the effect that slavery was to be prohibited from any territory to be acquired from Mexico by conquest or purchase. This proviso was rejected, but the vote on it foreshadowed the realignment of political parties. (See point 8, of this section.)

#### 4. Discovery of Gold in California, 1849.

The discovery of gold in California, a part of the Mexican cession, led to mass migration of small capitalists, working people, and free farmers. This mass migration resulted in the rapid population of California, and it quickly applied for admission as a state. The local population had no intention of turning over the state to the slaveholders to be cut up into large plantations. California, therefore, demanded admission as a free state and was so admitted. This admission was part of the 1850 compromise (see point 5 below).

#### 5. 1850 Compromise.

This arose out of the problem of admitting the territories of Utah and New Mexico, part of the Mexican cession, as states. The slave owners wanted the line of 36-30 extended westward to the Pacific, thus gaining an immense new tract of land. Finally, New Mexico and Utah were brought in without prohibition of slavery; the slave trade was abolished in the District of Columbia (although slavery remained in force there); and a new fugitive-slave law was passed. The population of Utah and New Mexico was to decide for itself the question of slavery or freedom; but since these territories had already been well settled by planters with their slaves, the outcome was a foregone conclusion.

The fugitive-slave law of 1850, part of the compromise, provided:

- a. A man claimed as a fugitive was to have no right of trial by jury (thus assuming guilt beforehand in contradiction to all accepted practices of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence).
- b. A man claimed as a fugitive was denied writ of habeas corpus.
- c. A special commissioner was to have sole power to decide the question of slavery or freedom for the fugitive, upon warrant presented by any slave catcher. The commissioner's fee was to be \$5 if he freed the Negro; \$10 if he sent him back to slavery.
- d. All citizens could be called on by the sheriff to help catch a fugitive or alleged fugitive, and if they refused were subject to legal penalties.

This law superseded the less stringent law of 1793.

#### 6. The Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the Kansas struggle.

The question of Kansas was of special importance because it threw into

direct conflict with the slave power -- that is, the ruling class -- great masses of people. It was Kansas more than any other question that crystallized the sentiment leading to the breakdown of old party lines and the formation of the Republican Party.

The year 1854 brought into Congress the question of admitting states carved out of territories called Kansas and Nebraska. Those territories lay north of the line of 36-30, the line of freedom decided upon at the time of the Missouri compromise. The capitalists and workers and free farmers wanted a free West; the slave owners a slave West. The labor movement of the day pressed for a Homestead Act, giving every settler in the West title to 160 acres.

Although the slave owners had accepted the Missouri Compromise of 1820 as setting the dividing line, they now wanted to overthrow this boundary. Their instrument in this aggression was Stephen A. Douglas, Senator from Illinois, and chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories. Douglas reported to Congress a bill -- which became known as the Kansas-Nebraska bill -- for the organization of the new states. This provided that all questions pertaining to slavery were to be left to the people of the territories. This became famous as the principle of "squatters' sovereignty." The bill declared the Missouri compromise to have been illegal. Since free labor and slave labor could not live side by side, permitting the slave owners to go into the territory with slaves, the question was automatically settled in favor of slavery.

Mass meetings were held all over the North, to denounce the new encroachment of the slavocracy. Letters, resolutions, telegrams, and petitions poured into Congress. One was signed by 1100 women led by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin. Another bore the names of more than 3,000 New England clergymen.

In May, 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska bill became law. Immediately a horde of armed men, the hired thugs of the slave holders, rushed over the Missouri border into the Kansas territory. They registered themselves as Kansas citizens, although they continued to live in Missouri.

The anti-slavery forces initiated a counter-immigration. Eli Thayer, member of the Massachusetts legislature, organized the New England Emigrant Aid Society, the first of hundreds of similar bodies. Thayer broached his plan to a mass meeting called to protest the Kansas-Nebraska law. In the summer of 1854, the first company of free-state settlers left for the disputed soil.

Kansas Leagues were formed in every northern state. Finally these state and local Kansas Leagues organized a center in Chicago, with Lincoln as one of the members of the national committee.

Workers and farmers went to Kansas from the East and Middle West, and also from the South. Many of these were not abolitionists, but opposed slavery extension because this western territory was the common heritage of the entire nation. The West offered farms to settlers at low cost, and by draining off workers from the East it kept wages comparatively high.

Money was raised for the Kansas struggle in mass meetings, and by house-to-house collections. Thayer wrote: "We do not rely on large subscriptions, but on the dimes and dollars of the millions."



Raids on the free-state settlers were organized from the Missouri border. General Benjamin F. Stringfellow, one of the organizers of the pro-slavery forces, said: "I tell you to mark every scoundrel who is in the least tainted with Abolitionism or Free-Soilism, and exterminate him. I advise you, one and all, to enter every election district in Kansas and vote at the point of the bowie-knife and the revolver. It is enough that the slave-holding interest wills it from which there is no appeal."

In November, 1854, the Kansas settlers went to the polls to elect a delegate to Congress. While the voting was in progress, a pro-slavery mob poured over the Missouri boundary, brandished knives and revolvers, drove off the settlers, bullied the election judges, and stuffed the ballot-boxes for the pro-slavery candidate. More than 3,000 votes were cast that day; yet the total number of voters in Kansas did not exceed 1500. These tactics were repeated in later elections.

A pro-slavery legislature was elected which decreed the death penalty for assisting slaves to escape, or for inciting or aiding an insurrection of slaves or free Negroes. To deny in speaking or writing the right to hold slaves, was a felony; free-state papers were barred from the mails as incendiary publications. No man opposed to slavery might sit on a jury involving slavery questions. To vote, all men had to take an oath to uphold the fugitive-slave law.

In May, 1856, came the destruction of Lawrence, the chief free-state settlement. A pro-slavery grand jury found bills for treason against the free-state leaders, and presented the hotel and newspaper in Lawrence as nuisances. To abate these nuisances, the United States Marshal summoned a posse which marched on the town. The settlement was set afire and demolished.

Active resistance to pro-slavery aggression was then organized. John Brown led in the organization of defense groups.

The anti-slavery voters finally forced a new election in 1858, in which they rejected a pro-slavery constitution by a majority of 10,000. Not until after the withdrawal of the southern senators from the Senate, however, was Kansas admitted as a free state.

#### 7. The Dred Scott decision, 1857.

Since the principle of "squatters' sovereignty" had not worked out well for the slave holders, it was necessary to proceed to a further aggression. The instrument of this new aggression was the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court was systematically packed by the slave holders throughout the pre-Civil War period. This was done by controlling the Judiciary Committee of the Senate.

The Supreme Court passed, between 1825 and 1859, eleven decisions on the slavery question, all of them consonant with the interests of the slave owners. Of these decisions, four dealt with the African slave trade; four with federal and state fugitive-slave laws; and three with the status of slaves who, though not fugitives, had resided temporarily on free soil. Of this last group of cases one, that of Dred Scott, concerned also the legality of slavery in the vast territory not yet admitted to statehood.

To assure the right of the slavocracy to extend its domain from ocean to ocean, the Supreme Court took advantage of what would ordinarily have been a

minor tangle at law, and pronounced the Dred Scott decision.

A Negro slave, Dred Scott, brought suit against the widow of his former master in the State Circuit Court of St. Louis, alleging that his sojourn in territory north of the Missouri Compromise line, in his master's service, had effected his liberation according to the terms of the statute.

It was the contention of Dred Scott's master that a Negro was not a citizen of the United States, and could not sue in the federal courts. He asked, therefore, that the case be dismissed. The court agreed that a Negro had no right to sue. That being so, it was not necessary to enter into questions raised in the litigation. But the justices were not willing to terminate the controversy so simply. They felt that the time had come to deal Abolition a judicial blow.

Confidential letters which have since come to light show that the southern members of the court were in constant communication with the incoming president, Buchanan, on the progress of the case; that the more aggressive of the pro-slavery justices used the president-elect to whip up their colleagues; and that Buchanan's pretense, in his inaugural address, that he was ignorant of the nature of the forthcoming decision, was a lie uttered in the first hour of his administration.

There were two major questions which the court undertook to decide. First, was a free Negro a citizen? Second, was that portion of the Missouri Compromise Act which prohibited slavery north of the 36-30 line constitutional?

It was the intention of the framers of the Constitution, declared Chief Justice Taney, to set up in the United States a government of white men. They did not look upon Negroes as citizens. The Negroes had, in fact, been regarded at the time of the adoption of the Constitution as "beings of an inferior order, and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Therefore, Negroes and the descendants of Negroes could not enjoy citizenship. The phrase used in the Declaration of Independence, that "all men are created equal," did not include Negroes, free or slave.

Politically, the most significant part of the decision was that which voided the Missouri Compromise line, and affirmed the right of slave owners to take their property into any territory of the United States. To rule, as had the Missouri Compromise, that slave owners might not bring their slaves into the northern portion of the Louisiana purchase, was to deprive citizens of their property without due process of the law. The court again declared the constitutionality of slavery; the Constitution made no distinction between slaves and other property, and no legislative, executive, or judicial authority of the United States could legally make such a distinction. This portion of the decision read: "The Constitution recognizes the right of property of the master in a slave, and makes no distinction between that description of property and any other property owned by a citizen. The right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed. The right to traffic in it, like an ordinary article of merchandise and property, was guaranteed to the citizens of the United States."

The decision was seven to two.

The decision aroused mass resentment. State legislatures in the North adopted resolutions declaring it to be not binding upon the people of the state, and passed also acts which nullified it in practice.

The Dred Scott decision -- speaking legally -- could be construed as outlawing the Republican Party in practice, for if slavery could not be barred from any United States territory, then the new party was attempting to accomplish an illegal purpose.

#### 8. The realignment of class forces and the birth of the Republican Party

In the 1830's and 1840's, there were two great national parties, Democratic and Whig. The Whig Party was perhaps to a greater extent the party of the wealthy manufacturing and trading classes, and of the wealthy slave owners; the Democratic Party was to a greater degree the party of the masses. Yet by the 1840's, this division was no longer very strict.

In the 1840's began a realignment of political forces on the paramount issue of slavery. This meant, of course, a realignment along stricter class lines. The process is similar to the realignment of political forces going on today.

This meant also a realignment of sections. Jackson's Democratic Party was an alliance of the agrarian West with the agrarian South, against the industrial Northeast. The new alignment, in the Republican Party, was an alliance of the West and Northeast, against the South. The West was populated chiefly by small independent farmers, and when the slavery issue became paramount, they opposed the slavocracy because it wanted to make slave plantations on the western lands. Making plantations of the west would have taken away the possibility of homesteading; it would have pushed the masses of whites to the fringe lands, as in the South; the white mechanics and laborers would not have been able to compete with slave labor. The western farmers, in fact, were among the first to move for political realignment. For this, their pioneer traditions were also partially responsible; further, they were not influenced, as were many of the workers of the East, by the pressure of the commercial capitalists who favored the slave owners.

Furthermore, the building of railroads connected the East and West in strong ties, whereas there was little railroad building, as there was little industry of any kind, in the South.

Hermann Schlueter, in Lincoln, Labor, and Slavery says:

"Slave labor became profitable only when the planter gave his undivided attention to cotton. The less grain and food products he produced, the larger was his harvest of cotton, the greater his profit. The cheaper he purchased his provisions, the cheaper could he produce his cotton, and the larger was his profit. If he had undertaken to raise his own grain, he would hardly have been in a position to produce enough cotton for export. The Northern and Western farmer consequently worked for the South, by sending the surplus of his grain there. But he demanded good prices for his products, while the planter was willing to pay but little and so the farmer was brought into further antagonism with the South."

And further:

"But these attempts aiming at the seizure of the still extant virgin soil in behalf of slave labor were at war with the interests of the farmer of the North and West. The farmer, also, was greatly interested in new territory. Often enough he left his old homestead in search of new virgin soil. But here was no place for the labor of the free farmer where slave labor prevailed, and

the competitive struggles between him and the planter, especially in the border territory between the free and slave states, formed an additional reason for him to take a stand against slavery. It was in the main pre-eminently the farmer element, too, which took the field for the preservation of the Union and the subjugation of the insurgent South."

The first foreshadowing of the realignment of political forces came on the Texas annexation. Instead of northern and southern Whigs voting together, and northern and southern Democrats, as formerly, the northern Whigs and many of the northern Democrats (those who were representative of the industrial bourgeoisie) voted against annexation. But the southern Democrats and southern Whigs, and a few of the northern Democrats (those who were representative of the banking and commercial bourgeoisie) voted for annexation.

Still sharper was the split over the Wilmot Proviso.

The Whig Party, which had been born in 1834, collapsed and disappeared early in the 1850's. This was because, nationally, it tried to straddle the issue of slavery.

The 1860, the Democratic Party, which had been born in 1832, split into two factions at its national nominating convention at Charleston, S.C. One group, whose leader was Stephen A. Douglas, favored "squatter sovereignty." This was the northern wing of the party. The other group nominated Breckenridge; its platform was the Dred Scott decision and unlimited expansion of slavery. There were thus two candidates of the Democratic Party in 1860.

#### Origin of the Republican Party

Before the formation of the Republican Party, there had been other anti-slavery parties. The Liberty Party was formed in 1840 and ran James G. Birney for president in the 1840 and 1844 campaigns. He got about 7,000 votes in 1840 and ten times that many in 1844.

In 1848, the Free-Soil Party came on the scene, composed of the old Liberty Party, a split-off section of the New York State Democrats called Barn-burners, and a few other elements. The slogan was: "Free soil, free speech, free labor, free men."

The Kansas struggle was the greatest single factor in fusing the anti-slavery elements. On the issue of no slavery-extension, groups of many political complexions united; out-and-out abolitionists; those who objected to slavery but did not think it could be interfered with legally except in new territories; and those who did not object to it in the South but were against its extension. The reason that the no-extension platform was revolutionary in essence, was because only the extension of slavery would permit the institution to live.

The desire for a new party was especially strong in the Northwest, and actual fusion of anti-slavery-extension forces was first achieved in that region.

The new party sprang up simultaneously in many places. It was born piecemeal, all over the North and Northwest. It was the union of all progressive groups and classes, on the fundamental issue of no slavery expansion.

Probably the first impulse was given by a meeting at Ripon, Wisconsin, called in February, 1854. This was called pursuant to a notice sent out under the signature of a Whig, a Democrat, and a Free-Soiler. At the meeting a resolution was passed, that if the Kansas-Nebraska bill became law, old party lines in the locality were to be considered dissolved, and a new political party was

to be considered in existence. This new party was to be called the Republican.

A few months later, in July, 1854, a mass meeting was held at Jackson, Michigan. This was pursuant to a call in the newspapers, signed by more than 10,000 people of all parties. The meeting was held in the open air, and nominated for the state elections a mixed ticket of former Whigs, Democrats, and Free-Soilers. The following resolution was passed: "Resolved, that postponing and suspending all differences with regard to political economy or administrative policy, in view of the imminent danger that Kansas and Nebraska will be grasped by slavery, we will act cordially and fruitfully in unison."

The same thing happened in other northwestern and northern states. Sometimes the new coalitions took the name of Republican, and sometimes they took other names. Sometimes it was agreed to vote a ticket with an old-party name provided it had an anti-slavery slate and principles.

The new party began to meet with gains almost immediately. At first it won some local and state elections, and sent new members to Congress.

The first national nominating convention was held in Philadelphia in 1856. It nominated John C. Fremont for president. The main issue was opposition to the extension of slavery.

A big factor in sharpening the line-up was the Lincoln-Douglas campaign in Illinois, in 1858. This was for the senatorship, but the interest extended far beyond state lines, and the debates were watched with interest all over the country. Douglas was the foremost proponent of slavery extension. Lincoln, his opponent, became known, therefore, as the foremost opponent of slavery extension. The Illinois campaign prepared the way for the greater campaign nationally, just as the New York City elections of 1837 had interest and significance far beyond the boundaries of New York.

Lincoln was nominated in 1860 against the will of the eastern capitalists, who wanted William H. Seward. The capitalists tried to keep the party fairly conservative -- but the western delegates were too strong for them.

There were four candidates in 1860, three of whom were pro-Union, and only one of whom was dis-Union. Their names, parties, and the votes they polled are as follows:

1. Lincoln. Republican. Platform; no extension of slavery. Pro-Union.
2. Breckinridge. Southern Democrat. Pro-slavery. Dis-Union.
3. Douglas. Northern Democrat. For "squatter sovereignty." Pro-Union.
4. Bell. Constitutional Union. Pro-Union, avoided issue of slavery.

Votes; Lincoln	1,857,610
Douglas	1,291,674
Bell	646,124

A total of 3,795,308 pro-Union votes

as against

Breckinridge 850,082 dis-Union votes.

The Bell ticket was strongest in the border and some southern states.

## VI. SLAVE INSURRECTIONS

Necessary materials: Basic material is in this outline. The student who wishes to read further is referred to Herbert Aptheker's article, "American Negro Slave Revolts," in the summer, 1936, issue of Science and Society. Also to Arna Bontemps' novelized version of the Gabriel insurrection, Black Thunder.

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The slave revolts are a little-known part of American history. Many historians omit mention of these revolts, and those who do take them up indicate that forcible resistance of the slaves ended with the Nat Turner insurrection. Actually, there are records of some 130 insurrections or intended insurrections between 1700 and 1865 in what is now American territory. We know that there must have been many more than are recorded, since the slave owners and their press made every effort to prevent the news of plots and insurrections from spreading.

What were the main reasons for the failure -- in the immediate sense -- of these insurrections? First of all, the Negroes lacked allies; they did not have the support of the southern whites in any large numbers. We must recall the lack of a white proletariat of any size in the South.

Further, the efforts of the slaves were necessarily localized.

However, the slave insurrections helped to a great degree to inspire the abolition movement.

It is important to notice the excellence of organization and detailed preparation in many of the slave revolts.

### Locality and Date of Known and Recorded Slave Insurrections or Conspiracies for Insurrection

<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>
1663	Virginia	1732	Louisiana	1811	Louisiana
1672	Virginia	1734	Pa., S.C., N.J.	1812	Virginia
1680's	Va., N.Y.	1737	S.C., Pa.	1813	Va.
1687	Va.	1738	S.C.	1814	Va.
1688	Md.	1739	S.C., Md.	1816	Va. S.C., Fla.
1690's	Va., Mass.	1740	S.C.	1810	Ga., S.C.
1694	Va.	1741	N.Y., N.J.	1820	Fla.
1702	N.Y.	1747	S.C.	1821	N.C.
1705	Md.	1755-6	Va.	1822	S.C., Va.
1708	N.Y.	1759	S.C.	1824	Va.
1709	Va.	1760	S.C.	1826	Miss., N.C.
1710	Va.	1761	S.C.	1827	Ga.
1711	S.C.	1765	S.C.	1829	Ky., Va., S.C., N.C.
1712	N.Y.	1766	S.C.	1830	Miss., Md., N.C., La., Tenn.
1713	S.C.	1767	Va.		
1720	Mass., S.C.	1768	Mass.	1831	All over South
1722	Va.	1771-2	Ga., N.J.	1833	Va.
1723	Mass., Conn., Va.	1774	Ga., Mass.	1835	Miss., S.C., Ga., La.
1730	Va., S.C., La.	1775	N.C., S.C.		
		1776	Ga.		

<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>
1836	Ga., Tenn.	1856	Ala.
1837	La.	1855	Md., La., Mo., Ga., S.C.
1840	La., S.C., N.C., Va.	1856	All over South
1841-3	La., Ga., Miss.	1857	Md.
1845	Md.	1859	John Brown
1851	Ga.	1860	All over South
	1861--65 .....		

### Brief Descriptions of the Chief Slave Insurrections

(All descriptions are taken from Herbert Aptheker's "American Negro Slave Revolts," Science and Society, summer issue, 1937, except the Amistad revolt, the account of which is taken from an article by Elizabeth Lawson, Communist, April, 1937, "The Supreme Court, Citadel of Slavery," and the Creole case, account of which is taken from various sources.)

1. The first known slave revolt in America was planned to take place in Gloucester County, Va., in 1663. Not only slaves, but white indentured servants, took part. Little is known about this insurrection plot. It was betrayed before it could occur.

2. 1712. New York City.

A conspiracy was formed by slaves in the city of New York on the first day of 1712, the plotters "tying themselves to secrecy by Sucking ye blood of each Others hand...." It matured very early on the morning of April 8, when about twenty-five of them set fire to a house, and, armed with a few guns, clubs, and knives, waited for the whites to approach. About nine were killed and five or six seriously wounded. The alarm soon spread and soldiers hastened from the fort. In about one day most of the rebels were captured. Six were not, for "one shot first his wife and then himself, and some who had hid themselves in Town when they went to Apprehend them Cut their own throats." A reporter, who had stated that the outbreak "has put us into no small consternation the whole Town being under Arms," later remarked, "We have about seventy Negroes in Custody, and 'tis fear'd that most of the Negroes here (who are very numerous) knew of the late conspiracy to murder the Christians."

Twenty-seven slaves were condemned, but six, including a pregnant woman, were pardoned. Twenty-one, then, were executed, and since the law passed in 1708 permitted any type of punishment, the Governor was able to describe the modes of execution as follows: "...some were burnt, other hanged, one broke on the wheele, and one hung alive in chains in the town, so that there has been the most exemplary punishment inflicted that could possibly be thought of..."

3. Stono, Georgia, 1739.

Sunday, September 9, 1739, the Negroes on a plantation at Stono, some twenty miles west of Charleston, South Carolina, revolted and killed the two guards of a powder magazine. Arming themselves, they set out for the Edisto River, whose mouth is directly north of St. Augustine, Florida (then held by Spain). "Several Negroes joynd them, they called out liberty, marched on with colors displayed, and two drums beating," killing and burning all in their path in their bid for freedom, so that "the Country thereabout was full of flames."

About twenty-five whites were killed, but not indiscriminately, for one, "a good man and kind to his slaves," was spared. On their march, the Negroes met and almost captured Lieutenant-Governor Bull, who fled and helped spread the alarm. A gentleman, appropriately named Golightly, observed the slaves, and ran to the nearby town of Wilton where the Presbyterian minister was holding services. The good Christians, being armed as usual, and learning that their slaves had left the services of their earthly masters, set out in pursuit. The Negroes, numbering from eighty to one hundred, who had by this time marched over ten miles, stopped to rest and refresh themselves. They were surprised by the whites, but, says a letter, "behaved boldly." One account reads:

"They gave two Fires (shots) but without any damage. We return'd the Fire, and Bro't down 14 on the spot; and pursuing after them, within 2 Days kill'd twenty odd more, and took about 40; who were immediately some shot, some hang'd and some Gibbeted alive. A Number came in and were seized and discharged; and some are out yet, but we hope will soon be taken."

About twenty escaped and ten were overtaken thirty miles to the south. They "fought stoutly for some time and were killed on the Spot."

#### 4. Pointe Coupee Parish, La. 1795.

A plan for revolt in Pointe Coupee Parish, La., in April, 1795, was never carried out because of betrayal after disagreement as to method. It appears certain that whites were implicated and three were banished. A group of Negroes attempted to rescue their imprisoned comrades but failed, twenty-five of their number being killed. Twenty-three Negroes were hung and their bodies displayed from New Orleans to Pointe Coupee, some one hundred and fifty miles away.

#### 5. Henrico County, Virginia (near Richmond), 1800, led by Gabriel Prosser.

The Governor of Virginia, Monroe, and the military authorities of Richmond had been warned of rumors of revolt as early as August 10, but Monroe heard nothing definite until two o'clock in the afternoon of August 30, the day set for the outbreak. At that time Mr. Mosby Sheppard told him that his slaves, Tom and Pharoah, had said that a Negro uprising was to occur that very evening. Military precautions were immediately taken, Monroe even appointing three aides for himself. Although Sheppard's information was correct, and on that night about one thousand slaves, armed with clubs and swords which they had "been making ever since last harvest," had gathered some six miles outside of Richmond, these precautions were unnecessary, for there occurred a tremendous rainstorm, flooding rivers, tearing down bridges and making military operations impossible.

The chosen general of these Negroes was Gabriel, slave of Thomas Prosser of Henrico, a twenty-four-year-old giant of six feet two, who had intended "to purchase a piece of silk for a flag, on which they would have written 'death or liberty.'" Another leader was Jack Bowler, four years older and three inches taller than Gabriel, who felt that "we had as much right to fight for our liberty as any men." Solomon and Martin, brothers of Gabriel, were prominent too. The former conducted the sword making, the latter bitterly opposed delaying the revolt: "Before he would any longer bear what he had borne, he would turn out and fight with his stick."



Scores of Negroes were arrested, every county captain in the state was warned, and over six hundred and fifty soldiers guarded Richmond. Gabriel was captured in Norfolk on September 25, and sent to Richmond. He was tried and condemned but his execution was postponed for three days until October 7 in the hope that he would talk. Monroe himself interviewed him, but reported that "From what he said to me, he seemed to have made up his mind to die, and to have resolved to say but little on the subject of the conspiracy." About thirty-five Negroes were executed. Two condemned slaves escaped from the Westmoreland jail.

Jefferson pointed out to Monroe that "The other states and the world at large will forever condemn us if we indulge a principle of revenge, or go one step beyond the absolute necessity. They cannot lose sight of the rights of the two parties, and the object of the unsuccessful one." Ten were reprieved and banished.

It is not known how many Negroes were involved. One witness said two thousand, another six thousand, and one ten thousand. Monroe stated:

"It was distinctly seen that it embraced most of the slaves in this city (Richmond) and neighborhood, and that the combination extended to several of the adjacent counties, Hanover, Caroline, Louisa, Chesterfield, and to the neighborhood of the Point of the Fork; and there was good cause to believe that the knowledge of such a project pervaded other parts, if not the whole of the State."

He did not, however, believe that it extended "to any State South of us, yet there were conspiracies and panic in North Carolina. A new ordinance (passed in July) requiring hired slaves to wear badges and masters to pay fees for the privilege of hiring out their slaves in Charleston, indicated the restlessness there. The nation, from Massachusetts to Mississippi, was terror-stricken; the former state provided for the removal of many free Negroes and the governor of that latter state issued a hundred circulars to the leading planters urging vigilance, while its lower house passed, in 1802, a bill which was killed in council, prohibiting importation of male Negroes. Gabriel's conspiracy was followed by the establishment of a guard of sixty-eight men for the capital of Richmond together with a night watch for each of its wards. Resolutions favoring federal aid in colonizing "bad" Negroes were passed and Monroe earnestly but vainly pressed the matter. The colonization society was finally formed in 1817, following a year of considerable unrest on the part of the slaves.

An interesting feature of Gabriel's attempt was that the Negroes expected, or, at least, hoped that the poorer whites would join them. Moreover, they had intended to spare Frenchmen, Quakers, and Methodists, and indeed, testimony directly implicating two Frenchmen was offered. These exceptions are easily explained. The current slogan of the French Revolution, "liberty, equality, fraternity," was enough to win the respect of these slaves, while the consistent opposition of the Quakers to slavery won the Negroes' friendship. Methodists, members of an essentially frontier church, were strongly democratic and equalitarian, and gave trouble to the slavocracy.

6. Near New Orleans, La. 1811

On the afternoon of January 9, 1811, the people of New Orleans were

thrown into the "utmost dismay and confusion" on discovering wagons and carts straggling into the city, filled with people whose faces "wore the masks of consternation" and who told of having just escaped from a "miniature representation of the horrors of St. Domingo." Governor Claiborne ordered out all patrols, forbade male Negroes from "going at large" and, though the "day was rainy and cold and the roads uncommonly deep," soldiers were immediately dispatched to the center of the trouble, thirty-five miles away. General Hampton, leading four hundred militia and sixty regular United States troops, left from New Orleans, and Major Milton, with two hundred soldiers, left Baton Rouge, and by forced marches arrived at the scene of action at about midnight of the ninth. Here were to be seen about four hundred Negroes, "the most active prime slaves," armed with scythes and cane-knives, and a few guns. To this number had grown the band, led by a mulatto, Charles, which had revolted from a Mr. Andry and had since marched some fifteen miles, devastating and killing all in its path, with drums beating and flags flying, "determined no longer to submit to the hardships of their situation."

General Hampton did not order his four hundred sixty men to attack until about 4:30 a.m., when he thought the Negroes were surrounded. But they rang "the alarm bell, and with a degree of extraordinary silence for such a rabble, commenced and affected their retreat up the river." They were then met by Major Milton's force of two hundred men and soon "the whole of the banditti (a favorite term) were routed, killed, wounded, and dispersed." Sixty-six were shot or executed on the spot, seventeen were later reported missing and "are supposed generally to be dead in the woods, as many bodies have been seen by the patrols." Sixteen were taken prisoners and sent to New Orleans for trial. They were executed and their heads strung on poles at intervals from the city to Andry's plantation. What more occurred there in 1811 cannot be definitely stated, but this paragraph from a New Orleans paper is suggestive:

"We are sorry to learn that a ferocious sanguinary disposition marked the character of some of the inhabitants. Civilized man ought to remember well his standing, and never let himself sink down to a level with a savage. Our laws are summary enough and let them govern."

#### 7. Charleston, S.C. 1822, led by Denmark Vesey.

A free Negro, Denmark Vesey, led a slave insurrection in Charleston in 1822. He read to the slaves "from the Bible how the Children of Israel were delivered out of Egypt from bondage." If his companion were to bow to a "white person he would rebuke him, and observe that all men were born equal, and that he was surprised that any one would degrade himself by such conduct; that he would never cringe to the whites, nor ought any who had the feelings of a man." He had not heeded the urgings of the slave owners for free Negroes to go to Africa, "because he had not the will, he wanted to stay and see what he could do for his fellow-creatures," including his own children, who were slaves. Most of the other Negroes felt as Vesey did. Two of the rebels said, "They never spoke to any person of color on the subject, or knew of any one who had been spoken to by the other leaders, who had withheld his assent." Nevertheless, the leaders feared exposure, and it came. One of them, Peter Poyas, had warned an agent, "Take care and don't mention it to those waiting men who receive presents of old coats, etc., from their masters or they'll betray us...." The traitor was Devany, slave of Colonel Prioleau.

Vesey had set the date for the second Sunday in July. Sunday was selected because on that day it was customary for slaves to enter the city, and July,

because many whites would then be away. The betrayal led him to put the date ahead one month, but Vesey could not communicate with his country confederates, some of whom were eighty miles outside the city. Peter Poyas and Mingo Harth, who were the two leaders first arrested, behaved "with so much composure and coolness" that "the wardens were completely deceived." Both were freed on May 31, although spies were put on their trails.

Another slave, William, gave further testimony, and more arrests followed, the most damaging of which was that of Charles Drayton, who agreed to act as spy. This led to complete disclosure.

One hundred thirty-one Negroes were arrested in Charleston, and forty-seven condemned. Twelve were pardoned and transported, but thirty-five were hanged. Twenty were banished and twenty-six acquitted, although the owners were asked to transport eleven of these. Thirty-eight were discharged by the court. Four white men, American, Schttish, Spanish, and German, were fined and imprisoned for aiding the Negroes despite the fact that their aid appeared to be only verbal. Although the leaders had kept lists of their comrades, only one list and part of another was found. Moreover, most of them followed the admonition of Poyas, "Die silent, as you shall see me do," and so it is difficult to say how many Negroes were involved. One witness said 6,600 outside of Charleston, another said nine thousand altogether were involved.

The plan of revolt, comprising simultaneous attacks from five points and a sixth force on horseback to patrol the streets, further indicated a very considerable number of conspirators. The preparations were thorough. By the middle of June, the Negroes had made about two hundred fifty pike-heads and bayonets and over three hundred daggers. They had noted every store containing any arms and had given instructions to all slaves who tended or could easily get horses as to when and where to bring the animals. Even a barber had assisted by making wigs for the slaves. Vesey also had twice written to St. Domingo, telling of his plans and asking aid. All who opposed were to be killed, for "he that is not with me is against me," was their creed. There was certainly also a plan to rescue the leaders; and, according to one source, on the day of Vesey's execution "Another attempt at insurrections was made but the State troops held the slaves in check. So determined, however, were they to strike a blow for liberty that it was found necessary for the federal government to send soldiers to maintain order." Contemporary evidence on only the second point has been found.

#### 8. Southampton County, Va. 1831. Led by Nat Turner.

We must know the circumstances surrounding the revolt led by Nat Turner in Virginia in 1831 to understand the panic that followed. The ten preceding years had been marked by a severe depression. In 1825-30, the prices of cotton and slaves reached the lowest point they were to touch until the Civil War. Slave trading, a very important industry in Virginia, dwindled and to the local consternation the Negro population grew more rapidly than did the whites.

British anti-slavery agitation increased. Mexico abolished slavery in 1829, and attempts were made by Mexico and Colombia (apparently backed by England and France), to acquire Puerto Rico and Cuba and wipe out slavery there. Moreover, from 1825 to 1832 there were slave revolts and plots in Venezuela, Brazil, Cuba, Martinique, and the British West Indies (Tortola, Antigua and Jamaica), as well as in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana. It was due to the urging of some of these states that additional federal troops were sent into Louisiana and Virginia in the spring of 1831. They soon saw service in the Nat

Turner revolt.

Nat Turner was born October 2, 1800 and at the time of the revolt was described as follows:

5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, weighs between 150 and 160 pounds, rather bright complexion, but not a mulatto, broad shoulders, large flat nose, large eyes, broad flat feet, rather knock-kneed, walks brisk and active, hair on the top of the head very thin, no beard, except on the upper lip and the top of the chin, a scar on one of his temples, also one on the back of his neck, a large knot on one of the bones of his right arm, near the wrist, produced by a blow.

Turner was an intelligent and gifted man who could not reconcile himself to the status quo.

Early in 1831, Turner told four slaves that it was time to prepare the revolt. July fourth was selected. This leads another writer, W.H. Parker, to cry, "Shame, Shame," for he believes that Negroes in fighting for freedom would "pervert that sacred day!" But Turner was ill on the "sacred day." A meeting was called for Sunday, August 21. Turner arrived last and noticed a newcomer. "I saluted them on coming up, and asked Will how he came there; he answered his life was worth no more than others, and his liberty as dear to him. I asked him if he meant to obtain it? He said he would or lose his life. This was enough to put him in full confidence."

Such were the "bandits," as the governor and press called them, that Turner led. In the evening of that Sunday this group of six slaves started on their crusade against slavery by killing Turner's master, Joseph Travis, together with his family. Within twenty-four hours, some seventy Negroes, several mounted, had covered an area of twenty miles and had killed about sixty men, women, and children. When within three miles of the Southampton county seat, Jerusalem (now called Cortlandt), there was, against Turner's advice, a fatal delay, and the Negroes whose guns, said the Richmond Compiler of August 29, were not "fit for use" were overwhelmed by volunteer and state troops. Soon hundreds of soldiers, including United States troops and cavalry, swarmed over the country and, together with the inhabitants, killed more than one hundred slaves. Some of these "in the agonies of Death declared that they were going happy for that God had a hand in what they had been doing...." The slaughter ended when the commanding officer, General Eppes, threatened martial law.

Though he never left the county, Turner was not caught until October 30. By November 5, after pleading not guilty, for as he said, he did not feel guilty, Jeremiah Cobb had sentenced him to "be hung by the neck until you are dead! dead! dead!" On November 11, Turner went calmly to his death, the seventeenth slave to be legally executed.

The revolt and the panic that followed were the first important overt events fostering an open and decisive break between the North and the South, leading to severe repressive laws in every one of the border and southern states, the disappearance of southern anti-slavery societies, the appearance of scores in the North, the temporary strengthening of the colonization movement, a growth in Virginia sectionalism, clearly shown in the debates of 1831-32, in which the poor whites spoke against slavery, and minor population movements, particularly of free Negroes, out of the slave states. As a tradition, the Turner revolt has had and continues to have influence, the most important instance of this being its influence on John Brown.

## 9. Madison and Hinds Counties, Miss., 1835.

The slave holders of Madison and Hinds Counties, in the center of Mississippi, became uneasy in June, 1835, due to rumors of an impending uprising. In that month a lady of the former county reported to her neighbors that she had overheard the following alarming statement of one of her slaves: "She wished to God it was all over and done with; that she was tired of waiting on the white folks, and wanted to be her own mistress the balance of her days, and clean up her own house." A favorite slave was sent among the others as a spy and soon accused one Negro. This Negro "after receiving a most severe chastisement" confessed that a plot for a revolt had been formed and implicated a Mr. Blake and his slaves. One of that gentlemen's slaves "was severely whipped by order of the (Vigilance) committee, but refused to confess anything -- alleging all the time that if they wanted to know what his master had told him, they might whip on until they killed him; that he has promised him that he would never divulge it." Other slaves were tortured and it was finally discovered that there was a general plot of the slaves and that a number of white men were implicated. During July about fifteen slaves and six white men were hanged.

## 10. The Amistad Revolt, 1839.

An insurrection of Negroes aboard a Spanish slaver in 1839 resulted in a long judicial controversy, in the course of which mass pressure on a widely organized scale was brought to bear on the highest court.

In violation of the laws of Spain, the schooner Amistad, with about sixty Negroes and two white passengers, left Havana for Puerto Principe, another Cuban port. The Negroes spoke no Spanish, and were obviously recent captives from Africa; but it was the custom of the Cuban authorities not to inquire too closely into a profitable business. The story of the Negroes' capture and transport was typical of the cruelties of the trade. Seized and manacled on the African coast, they were rammed into the slave ship, and in a space not over four feet high, they sat crouched day and night, chained in couples by the wrists and legs. An unknown number of men, women, and children, died on the passage. In Havana, the captives were kept in their irons, starved, and regularly beaten.

Four nights out from Havana, the Negroes rose, killed the captain and three of the crew, and took possession of the vessel. The two white passengers were spared to navigate. They steered for Africa by day, but each night they turned the ship about. For 63 days the Amistad cruised about the western Atlantic waters, finally putting in at the Long Island coast. The appearance of the vessel aroused suspicion, and a United States steamer and several revenue cutters were sent to investigate.

Fifty-four Negroes -- three of them young girls -- were taken alive from the Amistad. The two white passengers filed claims to them as slaves; the case went in time before the Supreme Court, and the Negroes were kept in jail pending the outcome.

Under the leadership of the Abolitionists, a mass defense movement was organized. Appeals in the anti-slavery press brought funds to cover legal expenses and to provide prison comforts. The protests which poured in upon the Supreme Court caused a government committee to report in indignation:

"A lawless combination insisting that these blacks were guilty of no offense, resisted their being punished. Zealots, with the help of the press, resisted the cause of justice, and resolved to free the Negro malefactors. Moral force and intimidation were put in operation to awe the courts. The fanatical denunciation of Negro slavery created these blacks heroes and martyrs."

Basing itself on Spain's prohibition of the African slave trade, the Supreme Court in 1841 decided that the Negroes had been seized contrary to law, and were entitled to their freedom. Mass meetings greeted the insurrectionists upon their release from jail, and Cinque, leader of the uprising, addressed cheering New England crowds in his native tongue.

#### 11. Central and South Central Louisiana, 1840.

In 1840 there was intense excitement in the central and south central parts of Louisiana. The New Orleans Picayune of September 1 states: "Four hundred slaves living in the parish of Iberville, Louisiana, were induced on the 25th ultimo, to rise against their masters, but they were easily put down, forty were placed in confinement and twenty sentenced to be hung." A letter of August 26 remarks that twenty-nine slaves were to be hanged in Rapides and Avoyelles parishes. "A Negro man...confessed, after being taken up, that he had intended, if successful, to whip his master to death. The whole country was constantly patrolled by citizens." According to Solomon Northrup, a free Negro who was kidnaped in Washington and arrived in this region 1841, the Negroes had planned a mass flight, presumably to Mexico, but when all preparations had been made, the leader, Lew Cheney, "in order to curry favor with his master," betrayed the plot. "The fugitives were surrounded...carried in chains to Alexandria (in Rapides) and hung by the populace. Not only those, but many who were suspected, though entirely innocent, were taken from the field and from the cabin, and without the shadow of process or form of trial hurried to the scaffold." A regiment of soldiers was required to stop the slaughter. "Lew Cheney escaped, and was even rewarded for his treachery...his name is despised and execrated by all his race throughout the parishes of Rapides and Avoyelles."

#### 12. The Creole revolt, at sea, 1841. Led by Madison Washington.

The ship Creole left Hampton, Va., on October 30, 1841, loaded with tobacco and slaves for New Orleans. Nineteen slaves, under the leadership of one Madison Washington, rose and killed one passenger, wounded the captain and part of the crew, and forced the first mate to take the boat to Nassau, New Providence, British territory. On their arrival at Nassau, they were charged with mutiny and murder. They were placed under custody of the authorities of the island. The United States demanded their release to the United States government for trial, but the British government, no doubt influenced by considerable mass pressure on the part of the British anti-slavery movement, which held meetings and sent a deputation to the government, declared the Negroes free.

#### 13. Slave revolts in 1856-60.

During the six years preceding the Civil War there were reports of slave conspiracies and revolts in Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee. The greatest excitement was during the presidential campaign years of 1856 and 1860 and some reports are of doubtful validity. But enough remains to warrant the statement that Negro restlessness was characteristic. The excitement started

in September of 1856 in Texas, ran through Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, and reached its height in December, especially in Kentucky and Tennessee. Probably thousands were arrested, certainly hundreds were lashed and tortured, and at least sixty were killed.

Preceding, during, and following the John Brown raid, the excitement was extraordinary. The facts pertinent to this paper, concerning that raid, may be briefly stated. While his biographers have pointed out that Nat Turner was one of the immortal old man's heroes, none has mentioned the later risings of the slaves, particularly those of 1856, as having influenced him. But there is evidence that one of Brown's most trusted followers, Charles P. Tidd, had received a letter at Tabor, Iowa, from E.W. Clarke, dated December 25, 1856, in which this occurred: "The slaves are in a state of insurrection all over the country. Every paper brings us accounts of their plots for a general uprising."

It is likely that this in part explains Brown's feelings, expressed in August, 1857, that the Negroes would immediately respond to his efforts though no preparatory notice had been given them. He told W.A. Phillips (who felt that the Negroes were a "peaceful, domestic, inoffensive race...incapable of reprisal") that "You have not studied them right, and you have not studied them long enough." We must also remember that Brown's most famous exploit before Harper's Ferry, was his forcible freeing of eleven slaves in Missouri in 1858 and guiding them to Canada. This was undertaken at the request of one of the Negroes and could not have been carried out had it not been for the fighting spirit of these men and women.

The raid would not have been possible without the counsel of such Negroes as Frederick Douglass, William Still, and Henry Highland Garnett, who also raised funds. The raiding party itself contained five Negroes, four escaped slaves returning to slave territory, Copeland, Leary, Anderson, Green, and one free Negro, Newby, who was spurred on by the desire to free his own children and wife who had but recently written him: "Come this fall without fail, money or no money. I want to see you so much; that is one bright hope I have before me." (See Chapter VII, point 6.)

Dallas was destroyed by fire in July 1860, and this was attributed to the slaves. Three Negroes, Sam, Cato, and Patrick, were executed;

"As they passed through the town they surveyed with composure the ruins of the once Flourishing town that now lay a blackened mass before them.... They met their fate with a composure worthy of a better cause. Patrick, with unparalleled nonchalance, died with a chew of tobacco in his mouth, and refused to make any statement whatever."

The story of four years before was repeated and literally thousands of slaves were tortured, lashed, banished, murdered. Every plot or revolt or supposed conspiracy was blamed upon the "Black" Republican Party. The Senator from Texas, Wigfall, said (December 12, 1860):

"We say to those States that you shall not...permit men to go there and excite your citizens to make John Brown raids....You shall not publish newspapers and pamphlets to excite our slaves to insurrection....We shall have peace (or) withdraw from the Union."

## VII. THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT

### 1. General Introduction

Abolition was part of the great world reform movement of the first half of the nineteenth century. This reform involved abolition of slavery and the slave trade, woman suffrage, labor unionism, and the rights of labor generally, the crusade against intemperance, efforts for poor-relief, for betterment of conditions of convicts, the insane, etc.,...

The abolition movement was a political vanguard, an important force in the realignment of political parties leading to the formation of the Republican Party (which opposed, at first, only the extension of slavery).

Gradually the issue of slavery split all existing American institutions and organizations; churches, schools, colleges, philanthropic movements, Utopian-Socialist experiments, and eventually, political parties. Thus, for instance, the main American churches were split. There was a Baptist Church North and a Baptist Church South; a Methodist Church North and a Methodist Church South; a Presbyterian Church Old School (South) and New School (North). The split in the Methodist Church caused by the slavery question in 1844 was healed only in 1938.

### 2. Class Forces Pro and Con

#### 1. Anti-Slavery Forces.

a. Industrial bourgeoisie. The slave system kept southern economy at a low level; the purchasing power of the mass of the population was almost nil. Further, the slave holders preferred to make their purchases from England at cheaper prices rather than from the North. Thus the industrial bourgeoisie was deprived of its great internal market.

b. Second, the plantation system barred northern capital from a potentially profitable field of investment, and as the slave system moved West, it threatened to bar capital investment from the West also. The slave owners invested their money in more land and more slaves, and had none for opening factories or mines. Also, they could not use slave labor in manufacture. The slave owners refused to permit northern capital to invest in the South, fearing the growth of a southern white proletariat which would inevitably challenge the domination of the slave owners. Many southern states passed laws forbidding the use of steam-power and otherwise hindering the development of industry. In several instances northern capitalists looking for a field of investment were forcibly driven from the state.

c. Third, slave economy kept a large labor force -- the Negroes -- from the labor market. It was as impossible to use slaves as industrial workers as it was to use them in scientific agriculture.

d. Fourth, the dominance of the slave owners in national life prevented the granting of national subsidies for internal improvements -- roads, railroads, canals, etc. The south, a non-industrial portion of the country, would gain nothing from such improvements.

e. Fifth, the agrarian South wanted a low tariff, or no tariff whatever,



on manufactured goods from abroad, whereas the North, trying to build up its infant industries, wanted a protective tariff. It was only after the Civil War had broken out that a protective tariff could be put into force. (However, we must guard against the idea of many historians, that the tariff was the basic cause of the Civil War. Slavery was the basic cause; the difference on the tariff grew naturally out of the fact that slavery was a non-industrial system, face to face with an industrial system in the North.)

2. The working class. The interests of the workers were in direct opposition to slavery, because the existence of a large body of unpaid laborers kept wages down. Northern and southern mechanics looking for work in the South found themselves underbid by slaves hired out by their masters. The best-known case is the underbidding of building workers on the construction of the Texas state capitol in Austin, by slave labor. The North-South wage differential existed long before the Civil War; thus, in 1850, the wages of women in Georgia cotton factories were \$7.39 a month; the women's wages for the same work in Massachusetts were \$14.57.

A free West was of the utmost importance to the workers. It offered a new field for free labor, and it offered the possibility of settlement on small, independent farms. One of the major demands of the labor movement of the pre-Civil War period was a Homestead Act (finally passed in 1862) granting to every head of a family 160 acres of land to till. Free or cheap soil in the West also kept the eastern labor market from too much competition and lowering of wages. The workers came into conflict with the slavocracy chiefly on the question of westward expansion.

The rule of the slavocracy crushed all civil rights, and civil rights are of major importance to the working class. For detailed discussion of the struggle for civil rights, see point V. below.

The anti-slavery movement began in the factories, and was for a long period much stronger there than among the petty bourgeois and bourgeois sections of the population.

3. The free, independent farmers of the North, and especially the West. Wherever the slave owners ruled, the rest of the white population was reduced to the state of "poor whiteness." The expansion of slavery westward would mean the loss of independent land ownership for the free farmers.

4. A section of the southern poor whites, especially the mountaineers.

5. The Negro people, North and South, free and slave.

The movement enlisted also the efforts of the best of the intellectuals of the time. Northern preachers spoke from their pulpits against slavery. All of the famous American writers of the period, with the single exception of Edgar Allan Poe, sympathized with the anti-slavery cause, and most of them worked for it actively. Probably the most active were John G. Whittier and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Both wrote and spoke for anti-slavery. Whittier, in addition, edited several anti-slavery newspapers. Other important writers who fought slavery were William Fenimore Cooper, Richard Henry Dana, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Walt Whitman.

## 2. Pro-slavery Forces

a. The slave owners, led politically by the top section of perhaps 200 owners, who had large plantations, which were always in debt. The commercial

and shipping capitalists of the North profited by the trade with the South, which had to import practically all manufactured goods. The shipping capitalists profited by carrying manufactured goods South and also by carrying the baled cotton, since the South did not develop a shipping industry.

2. The lumpenproletariat of the North, acting as the "bribed tool of reactionary intrigue" (Marx). The lumpenproletariat acted as slave-catchers, and as rioters who broke up abolition meetings, etc. It also served as the main base of the Civil War draft riots.

The anti-slavery struggle was a class struggle, which culminated in the Civil War. The true nature of the anti-slavery struggle as a class struggle has been obscured by the geographical separation of the combatants, with the progressive classes entrenched mainly in the North and the reactionary classes mainly in the South.

The forces listed above as "anti-slavery" did not always favor abolition as such, but worked, objectively, in that direction.

### 3. The Anti-Slavery Forces

There were many state anti-slavery organizations, advocating either immediate or gradual emancipation, in the period immediately following the American Revolution. Many of these were in the southern states. This was, of course, before slavery had become such a profitable institution. Gradually, the southern anti-slavery groups were suppressed or died out.

Among the most active of the anti-slavery groups in the earlier period were the Quakers (Society of Friends). The first U.S. Congress, meeting in 1790, received petitions against slavery from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, signed by Benjamin Franklin, its president.

One of the most important of the earlier anti-slavery groups was the Union Humane Society, organized with several hundred members in Ohio in 1821. This was chiefly the work of Benjamin Lundy. Lundy also established similar societies in many other states.

In 1831, William Lloyd Garrison founded the newspaper, The Liberator, in Boston. This immediately became and remained the chief abolition organ. It demanded immediate emancipation. It rejected all colonization and gradual emancipation schemes. Garrison organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832.

In 1833, pursuant to a call by the New York State Anti-Slavery Society, the American Anti-Slavery Society was organized in Philadelphia by a convention of 60 delegates. It set up a propaganda and organization machinery, and pledged itself to use every possible means to fight slavery. It published newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets; held mass meetings, toured speakers, circulated petitions, to some extent applied the boycott to products of slave labor.

In 1840, this society split into two. Garrison remained at the head of the American Anti-Slavery Society. The dissenters withdrew and formed the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. The chief figures in this second organization were John G. Whittier, the Tappans, Gerritt Smith, James G. Birney, and later, Frederick Douglass.

The main questions leading to the split were:

a. The question of political action. Garrison had denounced the constitution as a "covenant with death and an agreement with hell," considering it to be a pro-slavery instrument. He demanded the separation of the free states from the slave. He also refused to participate in the organization of political parties on a platform of opposition to the extension of slavery.

The "new organization" believed in the utmost use of political action, organization of pressure on candidates, eventually taking a big part in the organization of the Liberty, Free-Soil, and Republican Parties. Its members used the ballot in the interests of anti-slavery, and influenced large numbers of people to do likewise. The "new organization" denied that the Constitution was a pro-slavery instrument and opposed splitting the Union.

b. The old, Garrison organization was more or less sectarian. It insisted that its members should not only oppose slavery but also advocate a large number of other reforms, such as woman suffrage, temperance, etc. While the majority of the "new organization" leaders were also in favor of these reforms, and fought actively for them, they did not make the adoption of these principles a condition for joining the anti-slavery movement and fighting against slavery. The outstanding example of Garrison's sectarianism was his indifference to the Kansas struggle and the Kansas emigration, first on the defeatist ground that such struggle was useless, and second on the ground that not all the free-state settlers in Kansas were simon-pure abolitionists.

#### 4. The Main Forms of the Struggle

The Abolitionists utilized all the methods of propaganda, such as mass meetings, petitions, newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets, demonstrations, etc. The "New Organizationists" also brought pressure to bear on political candidates and office-holders, and worked effectively in the organization of the Liberty, Free-Soil, and finally the Republican Party. They were the backbone of the opposition to all the efforts of the South in the attempt to extend slavery.

The most important of the anti-slavery books was Uncle Tom's Cabin, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe and printed in 1852. This book was translated into 23 languages and was the best-selling of all books up to that time except the Bible. Another important book was Hinton Rowan Helper's The Impending Crisis of the South, printed in 1857.

Helper was a southern white who made his appeal to the non-slave-holders of the South, and by careful statistical studies exposed the effects of slavery on southern industry, agriculture, population, and the welfare of the people generally. Another very important, though less well-known work, was the series of articles, later collected into books, by Frederick Law Olmsted, correspondent of the New York Times, who traveled throughout the South and exposed the nature of the slave system in its everyday workings.

The Underground Railroad was a method of secret travel whereby approximately a thousand Negroes a year were spirited off to free land, either in the North or in Canada. It was carefully organized, had regular though flexible routes of travel, and conductors, station agents, etc. Abolitionists were, of course, the most active of its agents, but many who were not abolitionists also joined in this work.

On the Atlantic Coast, sympathetic sailors and captains concealed slaves in ships and took them North. Many slaves escaped without aid from the underground railroad, hiding out by day and traveling at night, following the North Star. The mountain ranges formed a chief highway of escape, and the mountaineers were often helpful to fugitives. Under direct pressure from the abolitionists, many northern states passed "personal liberty laws" designed to prevent the carrying out of the federal fugitive-slave laws.

Rescues of fugitives or alleged fugitives who had been arrested in the North occurred frequently, and drew in large masses of the population. The most famous of these forcible rescues were the Jerry rescues in Syracuse, Wis., and the Sims rescue in Boston. In most cases these rescues were the joint work of Negroes and whites, and often they resulted in the arrest, trial, and sometimes imprisonment of some of the rescuers. Joshua Glover's rescue in Milwaukee led to the trial and imprisonment of Sherman Booth, a white editor, the case eventually reaching the Supreme Court of the United States. In all such cases, there was a mass defense movement, which organized demonstrations, packed the courts, broadcast literature, etc.

The 1850 fugitive-slave law, instead of crushing the underground railroad, brought to it thousands of assistants. Both abolitionists and many non-abolitionists openly declared their defiance of this law and their determination to disobey it.

## 5. The Struggle for Civil Rights

The slavocracy in power attacked all the ordinary democratic rights.

a. The right of petition. Congress for eight years (1836 to 1844) kept in force a gag rule, which caused all petitions on slavery to be tabled. Ex-President John Quincy Adams, not himself an abolitionist, led the fight in Congress against this gag rule.

b. Right of free press. Anti-slavery newspaper offices and printing plants were often attacked and burned. The office of the Philanthropist, a newspaper established by J.G. Birney, in Cincinnati, Ohio, was three times raided in 1836 by a mob with the connivance of the city authorities. Elijah Lovejoy, who had founded the Observer in St. Louis, was driven out in 1836. When he reestablished his paper in Alton, Illinois, in 1837, three presses were destroyed by a mob, and when the fourth press arrived, the raiding mob not only broke up the press and fired the warehouse in which it was stored, but murdered Lovejoy.

c. Right of free speech. Abolition meetings were often attacked by mobs, and their speakers physically assailed. Thus, Pennsylvania Hall in Philadelphia, was burned to the ground because it housed abolition meetings. In 1835, Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston with a rope around his body. George Thompson and John G. Whittier were also made the subjects of attack, the latter finding himself the target of bullets as he drove about the streets in a carriage. These are only a few instances out of many.

Students were likewise denied the right to speak freely on the slavery

question. Thus, students of Lane Seminary in Ohio refused to submit to a rule which denied their right of discussion, and withdrew from the college, founding Oberlin, the first college to admit women and Negroes.

d. Right of trial by jury and of habeas corpus was denied to Negroes claimed as fugitives under the 1850 fugitive-slave law.

## 6. John Brown

Brown first came into prominence as an active worker on the Underground Railroad, then as a leader of the free-state forces in Kansas, where he organized active opposition to the attacks of the Missouri raiders.

On October 16, 1859, Brown, with a band of 21 men, five of them Negroes, marched from a neighboring farm which he had leased for preparatory purposes, to Harper's Ferry, Va., (now West Virginia). Before midnight he seized the bridges, the town itself, and the important federal arsenal. The next day his band was surrounded and overwhelmed by federal troops, and those of his followers who were not killed in action and who did not succeed in escaping were given a swift trial in Charleston and condemned to death.

It was Brown's plan to seize the weapons in the arsenal and arm the fugitives who would come to him. He and his band would then take a stand in the mountains and by guerrilla warfare drain off thousands of the slaves to the free states. He failed, however, to organize the slaves themselves, as Nat Turner and other insurrectionary leaders had done, and practically none of the slaves knew of his plans.

The raid on Harper's Ferry had a widespread and very healthy effect on northern sentiment, and aroused masses of people in Europe as well. During the week of the trial the eyes of the entire world were focused on the United States and the slavery issue.

It is impossible to say how many Negroes fought with John Brown at Harper's Ferry. Local Negroes from the plantations which he raided just prior to the attack joined him. However, we know definitely that five Negroes were in the original band of twenty-one men which accompanied him to Harper's Ferry. These were:

1. Shields ("Emperor") Green. Born a slave in South Carolina. After the death of his wife he escaped in a sailing vessel bound from Charleston, leaving his son in slavery. In Rochester, N.Y., he met Frederick Douglass, who took him to Chambersburg, Pa., to meet John Brown in 1859. He decided to go with Brown. He voluntarily returned to the South with Brown's band, traveling in the company of Brown's son, Owen. On the way the two were questioned and pursued by slave catchers. Green took part in the attack on Harper's Ferry and fought well. During the siege Brown sent him with a message to the arsenal where part of the Brown party was located. He was invited by some of the men to escape, as resistance seemed hopeless. He refused to leave and returned to his post at the engine house. He was seized there by U.S. soldiers. He was placed on trial November 3, convicted the next day, and sentenced to be hanged December 16. The state's attorneys attacked him ferociously for his bold stand in court. While the group was in prison, Green, like Copeland and Leary, sent constant messages of regard to Brown, saying they were glad they had come. He was executed on the same day as Brown.

2. Osborne Perry Anderson, born free in Pennsylvania in 1830, was a printer by trade. He worked at Chatham, Canada West, where he first met John Brown. He was present at the convention in Canada where Brown adopted a "Constitution" for a free America. He assisted in making the raid, just prior to the Harper's Ferry attack, on the plantation of Lewis Washington. This raid took Washington prisoner and recruited slaves into the Brown party. The raiding party insisted that Lewis Washington's arms, including a sword of George Washington and pistols brought here by Lafayette, be presented to Anderson. During the Harper's Ferry attack, Anderson went to the arsenal and fought to hold it, first having a skirmish with the militia on the way. He escaped from the armory when the fighting was over. In 1864 he enlisted in the Union army and became a non-commissioned officer. He died about 1872.

3. Dangerfield Newby. Born a slave in Virginia in 1815. His father was a Scotsman who took his mulatto children into Ohio and freed them. He had a wife and seven children in slavery in Virginia. At the time of the Harper's Ferry attack, his wife was about to be sold into Louisiana -- she was so sold after Newby's death. Newby was in the thickest of the fighting at the armory gate at the Ferry. He was shot in the neck and killed instantly, being the first of John Brown's men, white or Negro, to die. The mob mistreated his corpse, mutilating it, and cutting off various parts for souvenirs.

4. John A. Copeland. Born free in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1834. Carpenter by trade. He was a student in Oberlin, the Ohio anti-slavery college, and was one of a crowd that rescued a fugitive slave in 1858. He was sent by Brown as part of a group to seize and hold the Hall Rifle Works about half a mile from the armory. With others he retreated from the Rifle Works into the Shenandoah River. He was captured and almost lynched, but at the last moment saved for trial. He was indicted for insurrection and murder and died on the gallows on December 16, with Brown, Green, and others. He wrote to his parents from Charlestown Prison: "My fate as far as man can seal it is sealed, but let not this occasion you misery, for remember the cause in which I was engaged, remember that it was a Holy Cause. Remember that if I must die, I die in trying to liberate a few of my poor and oppressed people." And just before his execution he wrote again: "I am not terrified by the gallows, which I see staring me in the face, and upon which I am soon to stand and suffer death for what George Washington was made a hero for doing." Andrew Hunter, state prosecutor, said that Copeland "died with unwavering fortitude and perfect composure."

5. Lewis Sherrard Leary. Born a slave in North Carolina, 1835. Saddler and harness-maker by trade. He left a wife and child in Oberlin to go to Harper's Ferry. He was part of the party that captured the Rifle Works. He was mortally wounded on October 17, and died after many hours of agony.

## 7. Personnel of the Abolition Movement

### 1. Negroes.

Frederick Douglass. Born a slave in Maryland about 1817. Fugitive to the North. Worked as ship's carpenter and caulker. Became active in the abolition movement almost at once, as an orator. Was toured by the American Anti-Slavery Society. He toured England, Scotland, and Ireland for anti-slavery. On his return he founded a newspaper called "Frederick Douglass's Paper." (For his work in Civil War and Reconstruction, see corresponding sections of this outline.) Douglass was probably the most able of all the leaders of the anti-slavery movement, white or Negro.

William Still. In charge of the Underground Railroad at the important Philadelphia station, and otherwise active in the movement.

Harriet Tubman. Fugitive slave who returned at intervals to the South and brought approximately three hundred slaves to free soil. The slave owners offered a reward of \$40,000 for her, alive or dead. She was known as "the Moses of Her People."

William C. Nell, the abolitionist writer and agitator. Native of Boston. Was one of the first historians of the American Negro; author of Colored Patriots of the American Revolution and other books.

William Wells Brown, abolition editor. Born in Lexington, Ky., and worked in the office of Elijah Lovejoy in St. Louis. Worker on Underground Railroad, lecturer for American Anti-Slavery Society. Toured England and France for abolition. Wrote Three Years in Europe and other books. Regular contributor to the anti-slavery press. Helped to popularize Negro history with his books, The Black Man and The Negro in the Rebellion (Civil War).

Samuel E. Cornish. Edited the Weekly Advocate, later called the Colored American.

Richard Allen. Founder of African Methodist Church. Organized in 1830 a meeting in Philadelphia, which laid the basis for the Convention of Colored Americans. Although Allen died before the organization had assumed form, he may be said to be its founder. This organization of free Negroes met regularly, with the exception of a very few years, until the Civil War.

Henry Highland Garnett. Son of a kidnaped African chief. Became an anti-slavery lecturer in America and England.

Samuel R. Ward. Preacher to a white congregation in New York. Popular orator and lecturer on anti-slavery in the North and England.

Sojourner Truth. Escaped slave woman. Orator for anti-slavery.

David Walker. Massachusetts Negro who in 1829 wrote and published Walker's Appeal, calling on the Negroes to unite and on the slaves to rise. This Appeal was widely circulated in the South.

## 2. Whites.

The chief advocates of abolition in the North included; Wendell Phillips, the best-known of the white orators of the movement; John G. Whittier, anti-slavery poet, writer, editor, and speaker; Horace Greeley, editor; Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts; Thaddeus Stevens, Senator from Pennsylvania; Joshua Giddings, Senator from Ohio; Thomas Garrett, active in the Underground Railroad; Elijah Lovejoy, editor; his son Edward Lovejoy, active in the Underground Railroad; George Thompson, English abolitionist who worked for many years in America; Samuel May, Jr. and Samuel J. May; William Goodell, writer and investigator on slavery; Arthur and Lewis Tappan and Gerrit Smith, philanthropists; Levi Coffin, reputed "head" of the Underground Railroad; Theodore Parker, preacher; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, preacher, writer, and organizer.

The best known of the white women abolitionists (most of them were also active in the woman suffrage movement) were Susan B. Anthony, Lydia Maria Child, Lucy Stone, Abby Kelly Foster, Angelina and Sarah Grimke, Lucretia Mott.

The best known white abolitionists in the South were: Benjamin Lundy of Kentucky; James G. Birney of Kentucky; Cassius M. Clay and John G. Fee of Kentucky; Daniel Reeves Goodloe of North Carolina, and the Grimke sisters of South Carolina.

## 8. The Working Class and Abolition

The majority of the northern workers were either actively or passively anti-slavery, and gave the first impetus to the abolition movement. (See analysis of class forces, this section of the outline, for reasons.) The presence in America of a large number of German and French immigrants, many of whom were refugees from political persecution after the barricade struggles of 1848 in Europe, did much to clarify the American workers on the need for abolition as a pre-condition for a healthy trade-union and political movement. The leaders of the German workers kept up correspondence with Marx, who continually stressed the necessity for working-class activity for abolition.

One of the main demands of the labor movement of the day was for free settlement of the West, with a Homestead Law giving 160 acres of land to all settlers. The first National Trades Union convention, meeting in 1834, made this demand. This brought the workers of the North into direct conflict with the slave owners, who claimed the land for themselves.

There was a certain amount of confusion in the ranks of certain sections of the workers. Thus, for example, George Evans, one of the prominent labor leaders of the period, put slavery in the background. His theory was that granting free farms of 160 acres would solve both the labor question and the slavery question. He failed to realize that 1) land was limited and the slave owners would take it all if not checked, and 2) the existence of slavery was a drag on the labor movement. There was a certain amount of leftism and false "revolutionary" sentiment which declared that it was impossible, and even undesirable, to free the Negro workers from chattel slavery until wage slavery was abolished.

Other sections of the labor movement, however, were far clearer, and offered the slogan: "Down with all slavery, both chattel and wages."

The following material is from Herman Schlueter's Lincoln, Labor, and Slavery:

"...the industrial laborers and artisans of New England became early enlightened with regard to slavery, and they took position accordingly.... Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a native of New England, writes of the early thirties of the last century:

"The anti-slavery movement was not strongest in the more educated classes, but was predominantly a people's movement, based on the simplest human instincts and far stronger for a time in the factories and shoe shops than in the pulpits or colleges."

"...Like the unorganized mass of the workingmen of the North, so also the first unorganized workingmen showed an understanding of the question of Negro slavery and sympathized with the Abolitionists in their efforts to abolish the institution. The platform of one of the first political labor parties of New York contained a plank demanding the abolition of chattel slavery; and as an expression of their own class interest, they demanded at the same time the



abolition of wage slavery.

"The question of the abolition of wage slavery, as well as the demands of the labor movement in general, met with far less understanding among the Abolitionists than the question of the abolition of chattel slavery among the workingmen.

"(January 1, 1831) saw the birth of a movement for the purpose of organizing the workingmen of New England into an independent political labor party. This labor party was founded in a convention held at Boston in February, 1831, under the name 'New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and other Workingmen.' In the first issue of the Liberator William Lloyd Garrison opposed the agitation in behalf of this independent labor party.

"The hostile attitude of Garrison and a portion of the other Abolitionists toward the labor movement very naturally put a damper on the enthusiasm of the workingmen, especially the organized workmen, for the Abolitionists' movement.

"At that period, especially in New England, the disciples of Fourier and Robert Owen and other utopian social reformers, who had inaugurated a great movement throughout the United States, exercised a powerful influence on the ideas and opinions of the workingmen. The men and women participating in this movement, especially also those interested in the Brook Farm experiment, not only exercised great influence upon the workingmen, but they were also in close touch with the Abolitionists and they promoted the anti-slavery cause with great energy. Whatever school they might belong to, all these social reformers agreed with the organized workingmen on the question of Negro slavery, although they took a livelier interest than did the workingmen in the special work of the Abolitionists....these social reformers never tired of urging the view that not only Negro slavery but all slavery must be abolished.

"Thus, on May 27, 1845, at a convention of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, Robert Owen took the floor, and said that 'from an early period he was opposed to Negro slavery, and also to slavery of all kinds.'

"In a series of articles on 'The Question of Social Reform,' published in the Liberator in 1845, Albert Brisbane, the well-known exponent of Fourier's ideas in America, speaks of 'the institution of slavery' in its numerous varieties. Besides the slavery of race or color and the slavery of capital, he speaks of foreign slavery, home slavery, compound slavery, slavery of caste, slavery of the soil, and military slavery.

"It was at this time, in the summer of 1845, while Brisbane was publishing his series of articles, that Horace Greeley issued his celebrated definition of slavery. He had been invited to attend an anti-slavery convention. He declined the invitation and took occasion to show wherein he disagreed with the callers of the convention, his aim being to unite all opponents of slavery and of all slavery. He raised the question: What is slavery? and answered it as follows:

"'I understand by slavery that condition in which one human being exists mainly as a convenience for other human beings -- in which the time, the exertions, faculties of a part of the human family are made to subserve, not their own development, but the comfort, advantage, or caprices of another.'

"...The attacks of Garrison and his friends on the independent organization of the working class were in the main confined to the first beginnings of the Abolitionist movement.

"Some of the Abolitionist leaders gradually even came to conceive sound views in regard to the labor question. Most noted among these was Wendell Phillips, who in later years, after the abolition of Negro slavery had been accomplished, thoroughly identified himself with the emancipatory aspirations of the workingmen. In a speech delivered in 1847 before the Anti-Slavery Society in Boston, he suggested, for instance, that people cease using the products of slave labor -- in other words, that they declare a boycott against Southern goods. On this occasion he expressed himself as follows:

"'In my opinion, the great question of labor, when it shall come up, will be found paramount to others, and the operatives of New England, peasants of Ireland, and laborers of South America, will not be lost sight of in the sympathy for the Southern slave.'

"In the middle of the forties, an active labor movement sprang into being, which sought to extend its activities alike over the political and economic field. The organized workingmen emphasized their sympathy for the Negro slaves of the South, but did not fail to point out again and again the necessity for the abolition of wage slavery. In an appeal to the workingmen of New England, L.W. Ryckman, president of the New England Workingmen's Association, called on them to 'abolish all slavery, by connecting the obligation to cultivate, with right to own the land.'

"Half a year later, on January 16, 1846, a convention of New England workingmen met at Lynn, Mass., and took such unequivocal ground against Negro slavery as to make it perfectly clear that the special emphasis placed on the class interests of the workingmen, the demand for the abolition of all slavery, certainly did not imply any friendship for the slaveholders of the South and for Negro slavery. Public opinion in the United States at that time was excited by the impending war with Mexico for the possession of Texas -- a war, in fact, waged for the extension of Negro slavery and in the interest of the slave holders. A resolution was adopted at this convention which is characteristic of the uncompromising sentiments entertained by the workingmen of the North, despite the opposition of the Abolitionists to their demands. This resolution was worded:

"'Whereas, there are at the present time three millions of our brethren and sisters groaning in chains on the southern plantations; and whereas, we wish not only to be consistent, but to secure to all others those rights and privileges for which we are contending ourselves; therefore,

"'Resolved, that while we honor and respect our forefathers for the noble manner in which they resisted British oppression, we, their descendants, will never be guilty of the glaring; inconsistency of taking up arms to shoot and to stab those who use the same means to accomplish the same objects.

"'Resolved, that while we are willing to pledge ourselves to use all means in our power, consistent with our principles, to put down wars, insurrections, and mobs, and to protect all men from the evils of the same, we will not take up arms to sustain the Southern slave holders in robbing one-fifth of our countrymen of their labor.

"Resolved, that we recommend our brethren to speak out in thunder tones, both as associations and as individuals, and to let it no longer be said that Northern laborers, while they are contending for their rights, are a standing army to keep three millions of their brethren and sisters in bondage at the point of the bayonet.'

"Among the labor papers which the new movement called into life, the Workingmen's Advocate, with George H. Evans as editor, was one of the most prominent. Later, in 1846, the paper changed its title to Young America, and in the main championed the demands of the Free Soilers, but for the rest remained a staunch defender of the interests of labor. In this paper the antagonism between the Abolitionists and the Labor movement was pointedly revealed, and occasionally Evans did not hesitate to declare himself quite frankly against Negro emancipation, on the ground that in his opinion the blacks would be economically in a worse position under the system of wage labor than they were under slavery. (He wrote) ...'the efforts of those who are endeavoring to substitute wages for chattel slavery are greatly misdirected, and if they cannot be convinced of their error, they should, if possible, be prevented from making more converts to their erroneous doctrine.'

"Evans had become so obsessed with the idea that wage slavery was a harder lot than the slavery of the Negro, and he was so convinced that the realization of the programme of the National Reformers and of 'free land' would remove all evils, that he completely lost sight of the importance of the solution of the question of Negro slavery. He had no comprehension of the fact that the solution of the question of Negro slavery was a condition precedent to the success of the labor movement.

"Evans held that the solution of the question of wage slavery contained the solution of all other questions, consequently also of Negro slavery, and he believed so firmly in this solution through the realization of the free land plank of the National Reformers, which was to guarantee to every citizen 160 acres of land, that he regarded all other aspirations as superfluous and directed his own efforts stubbornly toward this one end. To Gerrit Smith, he wrote:

"'I was formerly a very warm advocate of the abolition of slavery. This was before I saw that there was white slavery. Since I saw this, I have materially changed my views as to the means of abolishing Negro slavery. I now see, clearly, I think, that to give the landless black the privilege of changing masters now possessed by the landless white, would hardly be a benefit to him in exchange for his surity of support in sickness and old age, although he is in a favorable climate.'

"We note the fact, easily enough to be explained, that the working classes of the purely industrial centers, especially of New England, took a more decided stand against Negro slavery than those of the large cities like Boston and New York, where Democratic influences were active in behalf of the slave holders and where, through commerce, various economical considerations tended to dispose the workingmen in favor of Negro slavery.

"Under the controlling influence of Joseph Weydemeyer, a friend of Karl Marx, the Arbeiterbund (the Workingmen's League) was founded in March, 1853. The Arbeiterbund originally gave little heed if any to the question of slavery, and its platform contained no plank referring to it. But when the question

became a burning one, the Arbeiterbund defined its position, and as on the labor question so now on the slavery question it was well advised by its counsellors. In a mass meeting called by the Arbeiterbund in New York on March 1, 1854, the following resolution was adopted:

"Whereas, capitalism and land speculation have again been favored at the expense of the mass of the people by the passage of the Nebraska Bill;

"Whereas, this bill authorizes the further extension of slavery, but we have, do now, and shall continue to protest most emphatically against both white and black slavery;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we solemnly protest against this bill and brand as a traitor against the people and their welfare every one who shall lend it his support."

"With the advance and cumulative intensity of the Abolitionist agitation, and with the culmination of political antagonisms between the North and the South, the German workingmen gathered in the Arbeiterbund gave increased attention to the question of slavery, and a large number of them, the clearer-headed, ranged themselves uncompromisingly on the side of the Abolitionists. Individual organizations, such as the Communist Club, contributed liberally toward spreading the light on this question, and they were so downright in their opposition to the slaveholders as to call any of their members promptly to account who fell under the slightest suspicion of sympathizing with the South. A number of gymnastic societies -- the Sozialen Turn-Vereine, also strongly opposed slavery and embodied in their platforms and resolutions planks demanding its abolition."

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Reading (supplementary): Lincoln, Labor, and Slavery, by Schlueter, pages 34-122.  
Douglass: Life and Times, Part II, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

## VIII. THE CIVIL WAR

### 1. Causes and Character: the Class Line-Up

1. The Civil War was an "irrepressible conflict" whose basic cause was slavery. It was a clash between two economic systems; one of these was founded on slavery, and needed constantly more territory if it was to continue in existence.

Furthermore, the dominance of the slavocracy in the Union prevented federal aid to such capitalistic industrial undertakings as railroad building, etc.; it prevented the spread of the capitalist (the more progressive) system into the country as a whole; it held back the development of a unified internal market.

2. Incorrect analyses of the bourgeois historians:

a. "The Civil War was a war over the tariff."

An agrarian system like the southern slave economy, which had to import all manufactured articles, naturally preferred free trade, with no tariff or a low tariff on imported manufactures. The South preferred to trade with England, with whose cheap goods the young northern indus-

try could not yet compete. But this was a minor issue. Actually a free trade tariff prevailed until after the outbreak of the Civil War.

b. "The Civil War was a war about states' rights."

This was simply the legal form, the constitutional shell within which the social struggle was taking place. The rights which the southern states claimed boiled down to one right, the right to hold slaves, to maintain and to spread the system of slavery. "States' rights" was and still is reactionary in social content. Today it is used by opponents of the anti-lynching bill, the child labor amendment, the wage-and-hour law, etc. It is a slogan opposed to the unity of the nation.

c. "The war was a war for the independence of the southern states which were on the defensive."

But if the southern states had wished merely to keep the system of slavery as it already existed, they could have done so even under a government dominated by the Republican Party. However, slavery cannot live bottled up in one place. It must expand. What the South intended was to conquer most of the American territory, including the border states, the West, and the Northwest, then to conquer Mexico, Cuba, Central and South America. Marx said: "The war of the southern confederacy is no war of defense, but a war of conquest; a war for the expansion and perpetuation of slavery. No dissolution of the Union would take place, but a reorganization of the same, a reorganization on the basis of slavery, under the acknowledged control of the slave-holding oligarchy."

3. The Civil War was a progressive war because:

a. It fought back against an attempted counter-revolution on the part of the slave owners (there is a parallel between the Civil War and the situation in Spain today).

b. Although it began without the intention of abolishing slavery, it inevitably became an abolition war.

c. It cleared the way for the free development of capitalism, a more progressive social system than slavery, across the continent, and removed the chief obstacle to industrial development.

d. It preserved American democracy, then the most progressive governmental form and the inspiration of progressive movements everywhere in that period. Marx said: "The first grand war of contemporaneous history is the American Civil War. In this contest, the highest form of popular self-government till now realized is giving battle to the meanest and most shameless form of man's enslaving in the annals of history." And Lenin spoke of "...the greatest world-historic, progressive, and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861."

e. It cleared the stage for the rise of the labor movement in America. On the other hand, if the South had won, the labor movement would have been crushed for probably a century. Marx said: "In the United States of America, any sort of independent labor movement was impossible while slavery disfigured a part of the republic. Labor in the white skin cannot emancipate itself where in the black it is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation."

#### 4. The classes involved:

##### For the Union:

- a. Big bourgeoisie and sections of the petty bourgeoisie.
- b. Working class.
- c. Free farmers of East and particularly of the Northwest.
- d. Negro people as a whole, free and slave, North and South.
- e. A section of the southern toilers, especially in the mountain regions.

##### Against the Union:

- a. Slave holders.
- b. Northern financiers and big merchants and shippers. This group, led by Wall Street, was the inspiration for the "Copperhead" (pro-southern) movement in the North during the war.
- c. Large but wavering section of the southern farmers.

## 2. Emancipation

1. The war was not undertaken for the abolition of slavery, but slavery had to be abolished in its course. The fact that the Republican government did not at once undertake emancipation was due:

a. To the mixed class composition of the Republican Party and lack of consistent outlook, with the bourgeoisie fearing to raise the issue of confiscation, the petty bourgeoisie indecisive, and the working class still in embryo.

b. To the policy of kowtowing to the border states and their supposedly "loyal" slave holders.

c. To the pressure of financiers, shippers, etc.

2. Effect of non-emancipatory policy in first two years of war:

a. Assisted south in a military sense because

1. Negro slaves could be used to do labor in the field of battle.
2. Negro labor in agriculture, etc., made it possible to utilize full man-power for the army.

b. Weakened the Union cause by failing to clarify the very principle of the war, and thus to add morale to the fight.

c. Weakened working-class and liberal support abroad by enabling the upper classes of foreign countries to state that it was not a war for emancipation and did not touch on the slavery issue.

d. Led to a "constitutional" waging of the war in the military sense, to a lack of unified command, and to the retention of such generals as McClellan, who refused to strike any real blows against the enemy. Under this circumstance, an anti-emancipation and even pro-slavery policy was carried out in the army. Thus, General McClellan had the federal troops return slaves to their owners whenever they came into the Union lines, and a number of generals warned the slaves against rising.

3. Gradual development of progressive policy by Congress and government during the war. The following measures were all taken in 1862:

a. Slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia (with compensation). Three thousand slaves were thus freed.

b. Congress forbade army officers to use the military forces to return slaves who were fugitives, to their masters.

c. Slavery was abolished by Congress in all territories and all future territories of the United States (thus overturning the Dred Scott decision).

d. Liberia and Haiti were recognized.

e. Congress declared free all slaves of rebels coming into government territory or under its protection.

f. A treaty was signed between the United States and Great Britain to suppress the slave trade by granting mutual right of search.

g. The government prosecuted and hanged a slave trader in New York City for the first time in the nation's history, although legislation had made such a course possible for many years.

h. Congress authorized the President to employ Negroes in the armed forces.

i. The preliminary emancipation proclamation was issued as a military measure, September 22, 1862, by Lincoln in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy. It announced that slaves belonging to persons who might still be in rebellion against the United States on January 1, 1863, would be freed. This exempted "loyal" slave owners of the border states.

4. Basic reasons for the issuance of the emancipation proclamation.

a. To weaken the South in a military sense.

b. To make sure of non-intervention from abroad, by proving to the British and French masses that the war was an anti-slavery war.

c. To comply with the increased abolition sentiment of the North. Constant pressure was brought to bear upon Lincoln to issue a proclamation of emancipation. The state anti-slavery societies in their conventions adopted resolutions for the support of the government and immediate emancipation. Delegations came to the government, not only from the abolition societies, but from such groups as religious societies, women's clubs, etc. Horace Greeley wrote in the New York Tribune, the most popular paper of the day, a signed editorial addressed to Lincoln, entitled "The Prayer of Twenty Millions." This editorial (August 19, 1862) was a demand for immediate emancipation.

5. The Thirteenth Amendment was passed by Congress during the war, January 30, 1865. It declared: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their

jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

### 3. The So-Called "Anti-Negro" Draft Riots

1. There were riots against the draft in New York, Boston, and a number of other cities. The worst was in New York, July 13-16, 1863.

#### 2. Causes of the riots:

a. The leading factor in spreading the Copperhead, or pro-southern sentiment in the North, which was primarily responsible for the draft riots, was the commercial and banking aristocracy headed by Wall Street, which had business ties with the South. At the direct or indirect bidding of this group, some newspapers and some public officials expressed themselves in greater or less degree against the war, against emancipation, and against the draft. For example:

1. In June, 1863, a meeting of editors was held in New York, which passed resolutions that papers had a right to criticize the conduct of the government and that no limitations should be placed on this criticism except in localities where actual hostilities existed or were threatened. This sounded "revolutionary" and "democratic" but was actually reactionary.

2. C.L. Vallandigham, member of Congress from Ohio, spoke freely in public against the war. He was arrested and sentenced to prison, but the sentence was commuted by Lincoln to banishment out of the North.

3. Ex-President James Pierce spoke at Concord, New Hampshire, early in 1863, criticizing the sentence against Vallandigham.

4. Governor Horatio Seymour of New York, Democrat, said in New York in a speech on July 4, 1863: "Remember this: that the bloody and treasonable and revolutionary doctrine of public necessity can be proclaimed by a mob as well as by a government." He also at various times denounced the Emancipation Proclamation and declared the draft unconstitutional.

5. After the Civil War, evidence was unearthed that the riots were part of a plot hatched at Richmond, in which Vallandigham played a large part. Emissaries were sent North with the aid of the captain of a large British blockade-runner to direct the riots from behind the scenes.

b. These reactionary, pro-southern elements, with headquarters in Wall Street, were enabled to utilize especially two groups of the population:

1. The lumpenproletariat.

2. A comparatively small section of the working class, for the reasons given below.



c. It was possible to appeal to a section of the workers against the war, because:

1. The draft, in order to exempt the rich, made it legally possible to evade service by payment of \$300 bounty for a substitute.

2. The wealthy classes were growing even richer as a result of the war, while the prices of necessities were soaring. Capitalists added to their wealth by methods which still further increased the sufferings of the people at home (speculating in necessities, raising prices), and of the soldiers of the front. Thus the elder J.P. Morgan founded the family fortune by buying up the government's condemned rifles and selling them back to the government at high prices. Other capitalists sold the government horses that were blind and crippled; sugar that was half sand; and textiles for blankets and uniforms that were made of "shoddy," the sweepings of textile mills held together with glue. A new class of rich arose, known as the "shoddy aristocracy."

3. Many Irish were especially angered by the draft because they were dock laborers, and the shipping interests had ties with the South and influenced the workers. Further, the unions on the docks refused to enroll Negroes, and as a result it was possible to bring in Negroes as scabs during pre-Civil War strikes.

3. Events of the New York riots. After passage of the draft act, 1863, handbills were circulated calling on the people to rise in defense of their "liberties." On July 13, a few days after recruiting opened, mobs began to march. They destroyed the main recruiting station and all its implements, set fire to an armory, attacked the houses of prominent Republicans, set fire to a Negro orphan asylum, attacked the office of the Tribune, dragged Negro workers out of hotels and restaurants, stopped omnibuses and street cars, cut telegraph lines, closed factories, machine shops, and shipyards. They attacked Negroes on the street, and mutilated and killed an undetermined number. One Negro was hanged to a tree. The soldiers were called out, and about 1,000 people were killed on both sides in four days of rioting. Governor Seymour urged Lincoln to postpone the draft until its constitutionality could be passed on by the Supreme Court, but Lincoln refused.

4. The riots were followed by a number of large meetings in New York, which, in the name of the working class, protested against the sentiments and expressions hostile to the Union, on the part of a fraction of working men. They also condemned the \$300 exemption clause and the profiteering of the capitalists.

#### 4. Negroes in the Civil War

##### 1. In the Army.

a. Government and army policy: The national policy at first, in line with the fear of proclaiming an abolitionist war, was to prevent the use of Negroes as soldiers. The abolitionists, the Radical Republicans generally, and the Negro people especially, urged a change in policy.

July 17, 1862, Congress passed a bill empowering the President to employ as many Negroes as necessary to suppress the rebellion

The final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation declared for Negro service in the Army and Navy.

October 13, 1863, the War Department authorized recruiting of colored troops in border states; in the case of slaves, masters were to be compensated.

By Act of Congress, February 24, 1864, Negroes were to be drafted. (Previous regiments in free states were of volunteers, and were enrolled under state, not federal, authority.)

b. The Negro troops. General David Hunter first drew the ex-slaves into the army, but he used the method of drafting them, and paid them nothing (the War Department allowed no pay). This regiment collapsed and was disbanded, although one company which held together later became the first company of the 1st S.C. Volunteers.

The first regiment of Negroes to be enrolled in the federal forces was the 1st S. C. Volunteers, almost all ex-slaves. They were 800 men, under the command of Colonel T. W. Higginson, a prominent anti-slavery preacher and writer (1862).

A little later, slaves who had escaped from Missouri were organized in Kansas by General J.H. Lane, as the 1st Kansas Colored Regiment (1863). These slaves had been declared free previously by act of confiscation as the army advanced into the South.

Governor Andrews of Massachusetts took steps to organize the first Negro regiment in the North, the 54th Massachusetts. Frederick Douglass assisted in the recruiting, publishing in his paper the appeal, "Men of Color, to Arms." This regiment left for South Carolina in May, 1863. Immediately afterwards the 55th Mass. was organized and left in June for North Carolina (1863).

Subsequently, many more regiments were authorized and recruited.

By the estimate of the War Department, 186,017 Negroes served in the armed forces, not counting teamsters and others in the Commissary Department. At the end of the war, there were in the army 123,156 Negroes (others had been killed, or mustered out because of wounds, etc.). At the close of the war, there were in the service 120 regiments of Negro infantry; 12 regiments of heavy artillery; 7 regiments of cavalry.

Negroes held about 75 commissions in the army during the Civil War. One was Lieutenant-Colonel William N. Reed of the 1st N.C. Volunteers.

Negroes especially distinguished themselves at the battles of Olustee, Fla.; in the South Edisto expedition; the battle of Dobey River, Ga.; Fort Wagner, S.C.; Post Hudson, Miss.; Fort Powhatan, Va.; Petersburg, Va.; South Mountain, Va.

c. Attitude of Confederacy to Negro troops; The Confederate War Department issued a ban of outlawry against white officers who recruited, trained, or led Negro troops for the Union army. That is, they (the officers as well as the Negroes) were not to be treated as prisoners of war if captured, but as bandits and outlaws. They could be executed as felons on order of the President of the Confederacy. All Negroes captured in arms were to be delivered over to the states to which they belonged in the South, and dealt with those. Several of the Confederate commanders announced in dealing with Union commanders (demands

for surrender, etc.) that Negroes in arms would not be treated as prisoners of war.

There were several outright massacres of Negro soldiers, the worst of which took place at Fort Pillow, Tennessee. This was held by 557 Union troops, of which 262 were colored. It was captured by General Forrest of the Confederacy on April 12, 1864, and 300 Union soldiers, most of them colored, were murdered after they had already surrendered. Prisoners of war taken by the Confederacy were tortured, and free Negroes sold into slavery.

d. Jim-Crowism in the army.

Negroes were at first recruited only for labor in the army, and given no uniforms. Later, they were given a distinctive uniform. Still later, they were given the same uniforms, but half pay. The 54th and 55th Massachusetts regiments refused pay for 18 months until the government agreed to give them full pay. They continued service during those months.

Often, the Negroes were sent alone into yellow-fever districts to spare the white troops.

There was no retaliation by the government for the Fort Pillow massacre, although the government had published a declaration that for every Negro soldier killed after surrender, and for every Negro prisoner tortured or sold into slavery, a white Confederate prisoner would be killed or put at hard labor.

Sergeant William Walker was shot by order of court martial because he had his company stack arms before the captain's tent. The reason for the rebellion was that the government had failed to comply with the contract giving pay to the Negro troops.

2. Other assistance by Negroes.

a. Many slaves deserted to the Union lines and helped the army in one way or another.

b. Negroes, free and slave, acted as scouts and spies for the Union army. One of the most famous was Harriet Tubman, who during the war acted as scout, nurse, and spy.

c. Some Negro pilots and stewards of southern boats led revolts and brought their ships and cargo north. The best known was Robert Smalls, Negro pilot of the Confederate steamship Planter, who took advantage of the temporary shore leave of the ship's officers to steer the boat to the Union lines and present it to the federal government.

5. International Solidarity in the Civil War

1. The British ruling class was anxious to see the South win, for the following reasons:

a. To keep the South as an agrarian market, selling cheap agricultural products and buying manufactured goods.

b. To divide the United States and thus weaken a powerful rival.

c. To stop the spread of democratic ideas of which America was the source.

## 2. Unfriendly acts of British ruling class to North:

a. Queen Victoria issued a neutrality proclamation, thus giving the South belligerent rights although the government in Washington was a legally elected government of a friendly power. (Note the similarity of this situation with that in Spain today.)

b. British financiers helped to float Confederate bonds.

c. Confederate ships built and released by England preyed on American vessels guarding the southern coast to maintain the blockade. For one of these, the Alabama, the British government had later to pay for damages done.

d. British shipyards built and outfitted rams for the South, although these were never allowed to leave British waters because of the attitude of the British workers.

e. In order to weaken sympathy for the North, the conservative British press argued that the war was not an abolition war. In this, they were greatly assisted by the policy of the American government for the first years of the war, refusing emancipation, returning slaves to their owners, etc.

## 3. Attitude of the British masses.

The workers, although they were thrown out of employment by the thousands by the cotton shortage, were overwhelmingly in favor of the North. It was their influence which prevented the government from declaring war on the Union, especially during the difficult "Trent" episode, when an American captain, without orders from Washington, boarded the British mail-packet Trent and took off the two Confederate commissioners bound for England, Mason and Slidell.

The mass pro-union sentiment was clinched by the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The mass sentiment took organizational form in a Union and Emancipation Society, which held 500 public meetings, and circulated over 400,000 books and pamphlets. It also toured prominent speakers for the Union, including Henry Ward Beecher, the American anti-slavery minister, and George Thompson, British abolitionist who had worked in America for years.

Under the guidance of Karl Marx, the International Workingmen's Association (First International) helped enlighten the British and continental masses on the issues of the Civil War. In 1864, the International sent an address of congratulations to Abraham Lincoln on the occasion of his reelection. (See Appendix, VIII a)

The following material is taken from Herman Schlueter's Lincoln, Labor, and Slavery:

"In the North of the country (England), in the cotton districts, where the manufacturers attempted to coerce their employees by starvation, one of the active agitators in favor of the Union was Ernest Jones, the champion and poet of the Chartist movement. His eloquence was irresistible, and his speeches against the slave holders were so impressive that the towns of Ashton and Rockdale had them printed and circulated at their own expense.

"Near the end of September, 1862, Lincoln issued a proclamation to the effect that on January 1, 1863, he would declare free all slaves in those states which should then be in rebellion against the United States and refuse to lay down their arms.

"The proclamation by Lincoln of his intention to abolish slavery by January 1 called forth great rejoicing (in England); and although there was heard here and there a note of disappointment because the abolition of slavery was put forth as a war measure and not as an unconditional condemnation of slavery on principle, great demonstrations of workingmen took place, alike in the north and south of England. In meetings at London and at Manchester it was resolved to send an address to President Lincoln expressing the thanks of the English workingmen for the Emancipation Proclamation and encouraging him in taking still more decisive steps. Both meetings took place December 31, 1862.

"The address adopted by the London meeting read as follows;

"'The Workingmen of London to the President of the United States of America.

"'To His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America.

"'Sir: We who offer this address are Englishmen and workingmen. We prize as our dearest inheritance, bought for us by the blood of our fathers, the liberty we enjoy -- the liberty of free labor on a free soil. We have, therefore, been accustomed to regard with veneration and gratitude the founders of the great republic in which the liberties of the Anglo-Saxon race have been widened beyond all the precedents of the old world, and in which there was nothing to condemn or to lament but the slavery and degradation of men guilty only of a colored skin or an African parentage. We have looked with admiration and sympathy upon the brave, generous, and untiring efforts of a large party in the Northern States to deliver the Union from this curse and shame. We rejoiced, Sir, in your election to the Presidency, as a splendid proof that the principles of universal freedom and equality were rising to the ascendant. We regarded with abhorrence the conspiracy and rebellion by which it was sought at once to overthrow the supremacy of a government based upon the most popular suffrage in the world, and to perpetuate the hateful inequalities of race. We have ever heard with indignation the slander that ascribed to England sympathy with a rebellion of slave holders, and all proposals to recognize in friendship a confederacy that boasts of slavery as its cornerstone. We have watched with the warmest interest the steady advance of your policy along the path of emancipation; and on this eve of the day on which your proclamation of freedom takes effect, we pray God to strengthen your hands, to confirm your noble purpose, and to hasten the restoration of that lawful authority which engages, in peace or war, by compensation or by force of arms, to realize the glorious principle on which your constitution is founded -- the brotherhood, freedom, and equality of all men.'

"On the same day when the workingmen of London in mass meeting assembled framed the above address, the workingmen of Manchester held a meeting for the same purpose. No less than 6,000 persons were present in the hall, the largest of the city. The address adopted here was sent by the mayor of Manchester by special messenger to the American minister at London, Charles Francis Adams.

"The address follows:

"Address from the Workingmen of Manchester to His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America.

"As citizens of Manchester, assembled at the Free Trade Hall, we beg to express our fraternal sentiments towards you and your country.

"We rejoice in your greatness, as an outgrowth of England, whose blood and language you share, whose orderly and legal freedom you have applied to new circumstances, over a region immeasurably-greater than our own. We honor your free states as a singularly happy abode for the working millions where industry is honored. One thing alone has, in the past, lessened our sympathy with your country and our confidence in it; we mean the ascendancy of politicians who not merely maintained Negro slavery, but desired to extend and root it more deeply. Since we have discerned, however, that the victory of the free North in the war which has so sorely distressed us as well as afflicted you, will shake off the fetters of the slave, you have attracted our warm and earnest sympathy.

"We joyfully honor you, as the President, and the Congress with you, for the many decisive steps towards practically exemplifying your belief in the words of your great founders: "All men are created free and equal."

"You have procured the liberation of the slaves in the district around Washington, and thereby made the centre of your federation visibly free. You have enforced laws against the slave trade and kept up your fleet against it, even while every ship was wanted for service in your terrible war. You have nobly decided to receive ambassadors from the Negro republics of Haiti and Liberia, thus forever removing that unworthy prejudice which refuses the rights of humanity to men and women on account of their color. In order more effectually to stop the slave trade, you have made with our Queen a treaty, which our Senate has ratified, for the right of mutual search. Your Congress has decreed freedom as the law forever in the vast unoccupied or half settled territories which are directly subject to its legislative power. It has offered pecuniary aid to all the states which will enact emancipation locally, and has forbidden your generals to restore fugitive slaves who seek their protection. You have entreated the slave masters to accept these moderate offers and, after long and patient waiting, you, as commander-in-chief of the army, have appointed tomorrow, the first of January, 1863, as the day of unconditional freedom for the slaves of the rebel states. Heartily do we congratulate you and your country on this humane and righteous course.

"We assume that you cannot now stop short of a complete uprooting of slavery. It would not become us to dictate any details, but there are broad principles of humanity which must guide you. If complete emancipation in some states be deferred, though only to a predetermined day, still, in the interval, human beings should not be counted chattels. Women must have rights of chastity and maternity, men the rights of husbands; masters the liberty of manumission. Justice demands for the black, no less than for the white, the protection of the law -- that his voice may be heard in your courts. Nor must any such abomination be tolerated as slave-breeding states and a slave market -- if you are to earn the high reward of all your sacrifices in the approval of the

universal brotherhood and of the Divine Father. It is for your free country to decide whether anything but immediate and total emancipation can secure the most indispensable rights of humanity, against the inveterate wickedness of local laws and local executives.

"We implore you, for your own honor and welfare, not to faint in your providential mission. While your enthusiasm is aflame, and the tide of events runs high, let the work be finished effectually. Leave no root of bitterness to spring up and work fresh misery to your children. It is a mighty task indeed, to reorganize the industry, not only of four millions of the colored race, but of five millions of whites. Nevertheless, the vast progress you have made in the short space of twenty months fills us with hope that every stain on your freedom will shortly be removed, and that the erasure of that foul blot upon civilization and Christianity -- chattel slavery -- during your Presidency, will cause the name of Abraham Lincoln to be honored and revered by posterity. We are certain that such a glorious consummation will cement Great Britain to the United States in close and enduring regards. Our interests, moreover, are identified with yours. We are truly one people, though locally separate. And if you have any ill-wishers here, be assured that they will be powerless to stir up quarrels between us, from the very day in which your country becomes, undeniably and without exception, the home of the free.

"Accept our high admiration of your firmness in upholding the proclamation of freedom."

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Reading: Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels: The Civil War in the United States, pages 57-83  
Douglass; Life and Times, pages 408-453  
Aptheker, Herbert; The Negro in the Civil War (pamphlet)  
Letter of the First International to Abraham Lincoln (attached)

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#### Appendix VIII a.

#### ADDRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATION

#### TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN

To Abraham Lincoln,  
President of the United States of America.

Sir,

We congratulate the American people upon your reelection by a large majority. If resistance to the Slave Power was the reserved watchword of your first election, the triumphant war cry of your reelection is Death to Slavery.

From the commencement of the titanic American strife, the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner carried the destiny of their class. The contest of the territories which opened the dire epopee, was it not to decide whether the virgin soil of immense tracts should be wedded to the labor of the emigrant or prostituted by the tramp of the slave driver?

When an oligarchy of 300,000 slave holders dared to inscribe for the first time in the annals of the world "slavery" on the banner of armed revolt, when on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great democratic republic had first sprung up, whence the first Declaration of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulse given to the European revolution of the eighteenth century; when on those very spots counter-revolution, with systematic thoroughness, gloried in rescinding "the ideas entertained at the time of the formation of the old constitution," and maintained "slavery to be a beneficent institution," indeed, the only solution of the great problem of the "relation of capital to labor," and cynically proclaimed property in man "the cornerstone of the new edifice" -- then the working classes of Europe understood at once, even before the fanatic partisanship of the upper classes for the Confederate gentry had given its dismal warning, that the slave-holders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy crusade of property against labor, and that for the men of labor, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic. Everywhere, therefore, they bore patiently the hardships imposed upon them by the cotton crisis, opposed enthusiastically the pro-slavery intervention -- importunities of their betters -- and, from most parts of Europe, contributed their quota of blood to the good cause.

While the workingmen, the true political power of the North, allowed slavery to defile their own republic, while before the Negro, mastered and sold without his concurrence, they boasted it the highest prerogative of the white-skinned laborer to sell himself and choose his own master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of labor, or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation; but this barrier to progress has been swept off by the red sea of civil war.

The workingmen of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American anti-slavery war will do for the working classes. They consider it an earnest of the epoch to come that it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead the country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world.

#### APPENDIX VIII b

#### MEN OF COLOR, TO ARMS

(Appeal of Frederick Douglass to the Negro People to Enter the Union Forces)

When first the rebel cannon shattered the walls of Sumpter and drove away its starving garrison, I predicted that the war then and there inaugurated would not be fought out entirely by white men. Every month's experience during these dreary years has confirmed that opinion. A war undertaken and brazenly carried on for the perpetual enslavement of colored men, calls logically and loudly for colored men to help and suppress it. Only a moderate share of sagacity was needed to see that the arm of the slave was the best defense against the arm of the slave holder. Hence with every reverse to the national arms, with every exulting shout of victory raised by the slave-holding rebels, I have implored the imperilled nation to unchain against her foes, her powerful black hand. Slowly and reluctantly that appeal is beginning to be heeded. Stop not



now to complain that it was not heeded sooner. It may or may not have been best that it should not. This is not the time to discuss that question. Leave it to the future. When the war is over, the country saved, peace established, and the black man's rights secured, as they will be, history with an impartial hand, will dispose of that and sundry other questions. Action! Action! not criticism is the plain duty of this hour. Words are now useful only as they stimulate to blows. The office of speech now is only to point out when, where, and how to strike to the best advantage. There is no time to delay. The tide is at its flood that leads on to fortune. From East to West, from North to South, the sky is written all over "NOW OR NEVER." Liberty won by white men would lose half its lustre. "Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow." "Better even die free, than to live slaves." This is the sentiment of every brave colored man amongst us. There are weak and cowardly men in all nations. We have them amongst us. They tell you this is the "white man's war"; that you will be no "better off after than before the war"; that the getting of you into the army is to "sacrifice you on the first opportunity." Believe them not; cowards themselves, they do not wish to have their cowardice shamed by your brave example. Leave them to their timidity, or to whatever motive may hold them back. I have not thought lightly of the words I am now addressing you. The counsel I give comes of close observation of the great struggle now in progress, and of the deep conviction that this is your hour and mine. In good earnest then, and after the best deliberation, I now for the first time during this war, feel at liberty to call and counsel you to arms. By every consideration which binds you to your enslaved fellow-countrymen, and the peace and welfare of your country; by every aspiration which you cherish for the freedom and equality of yourselves and your children; by all the ties of blood and identity which makes us one with the brave black men now fighting our battles in Louisiana and South Carolina, I urge you to fly to arms and smite with death the power that would bury the government and your liberty in the same hopeless grave. I wish I could tell you that the state of New York calls you to this high honor. For the moment her constituted authorities are silent on the subject. They will speak by and bye, and doubtless on the right side; but we are not compelled to wait for her. We can get at the throat of treason and slavery through the State of Massachusetts. She was first in the War of Independence; first to break the chains of her slaves; first to make the black man equal before the law; first to admit colored children to her common schools, and she was first to answer with her blood the alarm cry of the nation, when its capital was menaced by the rebels. You know her patriotic governor, and you know Charles Sumner. I need not add more.

Massachusetts now welcomes you to arms as soldiers. She has but a small colored population from which to recruit. She has full leave of the general government to send one regiment to the war, and she has undertaken to do it. Go quickly and help fill up the first colored regiment from the North. I am authorized to assure you that you will receive the same wages, the same rations, the same equipments, the same protection, the same treatment, and the same bounty, secured to white soldiers. You will be led by able and skillful officers, men who will take especial pride in your efficiency and success. They will be quick to accord to you all the honor you shall merit by your valor, and see that your rights and feelings are respected by other soldiers. I have assured myself on these points, and can speak with authority. More than twenty years of unswerving devotion to our common cause may give me some humble claim to be trusted at this momentous crisis. I will not argue. To do so implies hesitation and doubt, and you do not hesitate. You do not doubt. The day dawns; the morning star is bright upon the horizon! The iron gate of our prison stands half open. One gallant rush from the North will fling it wide open, while four millions of our brothers and sisters shall march out into liberty. The chance is now given you to end in a day the bondage of centuries, and to rise in one bound from social degradation to the plane of common equality with all other

varieties of men. Remember Denmark Vesey of Charlestown; remember Nathaniel Turner of South Hampton; remember Shields Green and Copeland, who followed noble John Brown, and fell as glorious martyrs for the cause of the slave. Remember that in a contest with oppression, the Almighty has no attribute which can take sides with oppressors. The case is before you. This is our golden opportunity. Let us accept it, and forever wipe out the dark reproaches unsparingly hurled against us by our enemies. Let us win for ourselves the gratitude of our country, and the best blessings of our posterity through all time. The nucleus of this first regiment is now in camp at Readville, a short distance from Boston. I will undertake to forward to Boston all persons adjudged fit to be mustered into the regiment, who shall apply to me at any time within the next two weeks.

Rochester, March 2, 1863.

## IX. THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD (1865-77)

### 1. Introduction; General Statement

#### a. Status of nation at close of Civil War.

Victorious close of Civil War meant crushing of the armed counter-revolution.

#### b. Tasks remaining to be fulfilled.

These tasks were those which would guarantee complete destruction of the economic and political power of the ex-slave-owners, the landed barons. These tasks included:

1. Confiscation of landed estates.
  2. Distribution of the land to the tillers of the soil -- the Negroes -- and also to the poor whites hungry for more and better land.
  3. Conferring of full political and social rights upon the Negro masses and the poor whites -- suffrage, right to hold office, jury service, equality in all phases of everyday life.
  4. Disfranchisement and elimination from political life of ex-slave owners.
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Reference: Allen; The Reconstruction Period. Introduction, 17-28.

### 2. Distortion of the Period

Distortion of the period of reconstruction by the bourgeois historians. One quotation will suffice:

"The state administrations (i.e., the "Black Parliaments" of Radical Reconstruction) offered the most grotesque travesty on representative government that has ever existed in an English-speaking country.... Never before in the history of the world had full civil and political rights been conferred at one stroke on so large a body of men, and never before had men been so totally unprepared to assume the new status assigned to them...the newly emancipated Negro did not take kindly to labor."  
---David Muzzey.

Outstanding examples of popularizing reactionary attitude toward reconstruction: Margaret Mitchell's best selling novel, Gone With the Wind. The film, The Birth of a Nation.

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James Allen; Reconstruction, pp. 7-14

### 3. Class Forces

#### a. Progressive forces

1. Industrial bourgeoisie of the North
2. Majority of working class
3. Negro people North and South, but especially in Black Belt
4. Section of southern poor whites

#### b. Reactionary forces

1. Ex-slave owners, now a landed aristocracy
2. Commercial and banking elements of the North, especially Wall Street
3. Petty bourgeoisie of the North, struggling with bourgeoisie for dominance and hoping to prolong political life by alliance with former slave owners.

### 4. Presidential Reconstruction (1865-67)

#### General Set-Up

a. This was period of reactionary reconstruction.

b. The struggle between the reactionary and the revolutionary methods of reconstruction came to the fore.

#### 1. Chief exponents of revolutionary reconstruction

- a) In Congress, the Radical Republicans, led especially by Thaddeus Stevens, the most consistent leader of the left wing of the then-revolutionary bourgeoisie.
- b) In the South, the mass of the Negro people.

#### c. Plan of reactionary reconstruction:

1. Restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves (i.e., no confiscation of the landed estates and other property of the ex-slave owners).

2. All white southerners eligible for amnesty with a few designated exceptions, chiefly men in very high positions in army and government of Confederacy.

3. Readmission of states on election of state governments by 1/10 of the voters of 1860. Voters to be qualified or disqualified by 1860 laws. Thus suffrage for all Negroes and most poor whites (because of stiff property qualifications) excluded.

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Reading: Allen; ibid, pp. 36-42

## 5. Presidential Reconstruction (Main Events)

a. Under Johnson's Reconstruction plan, the ex-slave holders returned to power.

b. Constitutional Conventions were held toward the end of 1865 in the southern states (to frame new constitutions). These conventions were elected without participation of the Negroes and poor whites.

c. The southern states sent to Congress (sessions of December, 1865) Alex Stephens, vice-president of the Confederacy; four Confederate generals; five Confederate colonels; six Confederate cabinet officers; 58 Confederate Congressmen. These were the leaders of treason and secession.

d. Southern constitutional conventions passed Black Codes, to restore Negroes to slavery in all but name. Their chief content was the vagrancy and apprenticeship regulations, designed to force Negroes to labor on the plantations under conditions imposed by the planters. These Black Codes differed in different states, but their main contents were as follows:

1. Rights of freedmen limited to right to hold and dispose of personal property; sue and be sued in courts; to marry legally.
2. Negroes not permitted to rent or own lands or houses except in incorporated towns or cities and then only under control of corporate authorities (to prevent Negroes from getting land).
3. Intermarriage between whites and Negroes forbidden.
4. Negroes must show license from police or written labor contract to prove employment (akin to South African pass laws).
5. Negroes could be arrested for quitting a job.
6. Anyone "enticing" a Negro from employment or aiding him to get away was guilty of misdemeanor.
7. No Negro unless in the Army could keep or carry weapons or ammunition (disarming in the face of counter-revolution).
8. Any Negro "committing riots, affrays, trespasses, malicious mischief, seditious speeches, insulting gestures, language, or acts" could be fined and imprisoned.
9. All laws of chattel slavery declared again in full force "except so far as the mode and manner of trial and punishment have been changed or altered by law." (Mississippi)
10. Negroes could not testify against white men.
11. Jim-Crow assembly and transportation laws in force.
12. Violation of certain laws carried more severe penalties (by law) for Negroes than for whites. In South Carolina, for instance, Negroes could get a death sentence for rape, homicide, stealing horses or cotton, and insurrection.

e. Johnson pardoned many leading Confederates, each pardon carrying with it an order to restore confiscated property.

f. Johnson began withdrawal of Negro regiments on request of the planters; number of regiments taken from field; attempts made to disarm and disband Negro militias.

g. The land was denied to the Negroes; federal troops arrived to drive out squatters; troops put down Negro peasant insurrections. (Land question discussed in detail in next section).

Allen; Ibid, pp. 56-61

## 6. The Land Question

a. The land question was the crucial question of the time. Its outcome would determine whether the Black Belt was to remain as a prison house of the Negroes; whether the Negroes there were to constitute an oppressed nation; or whether the bars of the Black Belt were to be broken and the Negroes were to achieve equal democratic status. It would decide the fate of democracy in the South. The revolutionary solution, not transcending the bounds of bourgeois democracy, was to confiscate the holdings of the former slave owners and distribute them among the Negroes and the poor whites who had only small, poor farms or none. Confiscation would break the economic power of the ex-slave owners, deprive them of a basis for restoration, and provide a class of small farm owners to be the base for bourgeois democracy.

b. The land question during the war.

During the war, the Negroes on the plantations that were conquered by the Federal troops, apportioned among themselves the land, the cotton, and the farm implements, preparing to take possession as soon as the word was given.

In three occupied areas -- Port Royal, S.C.; New Orleans, and a region further up the Mississippi River -- lands were taken over by Federal Army commands. No outright land grants were given. Negroes were put to work as wage laborers, forced laborers, or share tenants. Sometimes Negroes were given a small area for food crops, but made to work cotton plantations for the Federal Army. Some Negroes bought small tracts of land that had been sold for taxes.

In some places the large plantations had been assigned to the slaves with the understanding that the government would confirm their title to the land. For instance, the 10,000-acre plantation of Jefferson Davis in Mississippi was set aside as a home colony for the Negroes, under the protection of a Negro regiment.

The most far-reaching attempt to distribute the land was General Sherman's Special Field Order No. 15, issued January 18, 1865. This authorized Negro refugees following the army to take possession of the Sea Islands, off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina, and the abandoned plantations for thirty miles inland. Each freedman got possessory title of forty acres for the duration of the war, with the understanding that the land would be given permanently by Congress. Forty thousand Negroes worked this land, instituted self-government, and made many agricultural improvements.

c. The government land policy.

1. Congress rejected the bill proposed by Thaddeus Stevens (1867), embodying a revolutionary solution of the land question:

a. Small owners (less than 200 acres) to keep land.

b. Estates of leading rebels to be divided into tracts of 40 acres each for adult freedmen.

2. The government enunciated its land policy in March, 1865, in creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau), under the supervision of the War Department. Purposes were: to manage abandoned lands, supervise labor relations of freedmen and their employers, extend temporary relief to ex-slaves. Bill repudiated idea of direct distribution of land. It authorized the Bureau to assign to each freedman 40 acres of land from abandoned plantations. Land to be leased for three years at annual rent; at the end of this time lessee could purchase it. Actually, the Bureau sold most of the best lands to speculators. Bureau also, however, declared Black Codes repealed in some states, and prevented their application in others.

d. Negro resistance to reactionary land policy.

The Negroes refused to accept long-term contracts, share-cropping, etc., which the Bureau negotiated for them with the owners. They demanded immediate confiscation.

The Negro soldiers were particularly militant, advising direct seizure. Planters and their legislatures (during the period of reactionary Reconstruction) demanded withdrawal of the Negro troops.

Although by amnesty many ex-Confederates got their land back, in some cases the Negroes refused to return the confiscated plantations. When the owners of the Sea Islands, for instance, came for their lands, the Negroes armed themselves and refused to be moved. In some cases they drove away soldiers sent by the Freedmen's Bureau to move them off. Struggles for the land took place throughout the South. Sometimes Federal troops acted against Negroes.

Congress finally made a compromise settlement for the Sea Islands, confirming some sales of land to the Negroes, and providing for leasing of some government-owned land with provisions for future purchase by the freedmen. Congress carefully repudiated the idea of confiscation.

e. Share-cropping, a form of semi-slavery usually accompanied by peonage (debt slavery) came into general existence. Negroes were forced back upon the plantations.

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Reading: Allen, Reconstruction, pp. 43-56 and 61-72, and Appendix.

### 7. Negro Peoples' Conventions and Related Events

a. The Negro peoples' conventions which met in the Southern states in the summer and fall of 1865 struggled against the policies of the reactionary

Johnsonian governments of the South. They were the first concerted political action of the Negro people in the South. The most important of these conventions were:

1. Tennessee convention, at Nashville, August, 1865. This demanded of Congress

- a. That it give Negroes equal rights as citizens.
- b. That the Tennessee representatives be barred from Congress unless the state legislature recognized the rights of the Negroes.

2. North Carolina convention, Raleigh, September, 1865. This convention

- a. Approved in a resolution the anti-slavery amendment, and the recognition of Haiti and Liberia by the United States.
- b. Demanded cash wages for labor.
- c. Demanded free education for their children.
- d. Demanded repeal of Black Codes and all discriminatory legislation.
- e. Pledged support to Radical Republicans.

3. South Carolina convention, Charleston, November, 1865. This convention

a. Petitioned state legislatures for

1. Repeal of Black Codes
2. Right to serve on juries and testify in court
3. Right of suffrage

b. Drew up memorial to Senate of U.S. which demanded

1. Assurances of life and property, and freedom to sell their labor.
2. That government keep the promises of the federal generals and distribute the lands of the Sea Islands to the Negroes.
3. That all democratic rights -- press, assembly, suffrage, jury, etc., be secured.
4. That a free system of public schooling be set up for both Negroes and whites.
5. That Negroes be permitted to keep their weapons and not be disarmed by the state.

4. Georgia convention, Augusta, January, 1866. This convention

a. Created a permanent organization, the Georgia Equal Rights Association, to secure equal political rights.

b. Addressed memorial to state legislature demanding suffrage, jury service, equality in public conveyances, public education.

b. Bourbons responded to these efforts of the Negroes for equality by a series of massacres especially in Memphis, Charleston, and New Orleans. The most severe was at New Orleans, where police led a Bourbon mob to shoot down hundreds of Negroes and white Republicans gathered at their convention hall.

c. A delegation led by Frederick Douglass went to see Johnson early in

1866 to ask enforcement of 13th Amendment, and equal rights for Negroes. This delegation represented Negro conventions and organizations of 20 states. Johnson evaded the issue.

These Negro peoples' conventions and the events which followed during Radical Reconstruction prove that the Negroes were no "inarticulate mass blindly following carpet-bagger leaders," but an able, independent political force.

Reading: Allen; pp. 73-78 and Appendices 2 and 5.

On the Douglass delegation to Johnson; Douglass; Life and Times, p. 466, last paragraph to top of page 469.

## 8. Radical Reconstruction (1867-77). Congressional Legislation

a. Industrial bourgeoisie emerged in this period as the dominant economic force, feeling the need to consolidate its power politically by crushing the Bourbons and establishing democracy in the South. This policy would also score against the petty bourgeoisie in national life.

b. Congress took preliminary steps to prevent Bourbon restoration:

1. Prevented readmission of states reconstructed under Johnson plan.
2. Set up Joint Committee on Reconstruction, of 15 members, with Thaddeus Stevens as chairman.
3. Passed Civil Rights Bill (1866) empowering president to use the armed forces to guarantee to freedmen equality before the law in matters of property and security of person.
4. Denied representation in Congress to southern states.
5. Extended life of Freedmen's Bureau for another two years; granted it jurisdiction over freedmen.
6. Passed the 14th Amendment which
  - a. Conferred citizenship upon the Negroes (but at the same time some Congressmen by trickery sneaked in the "due process clause" in such a way as to provide for protection of corporations).
  - b. Provided that the basis of representation of any state was to be reduced in proportion as it denied the vote to citizens. (This was a compromise, providing merely that Bourbons could regain control locally if only they did not regain it nationally).
  - c. Excluded from national or state office former leaders of the Confederacy until pardoned by Congress.
  - d. Repudiated all Confederate debts.

c. Congress then took the crowning step to prevent Bourbon restoration: the Reconstruction Acts. The first was passed in February, 1867, and provided:

1. That the existing governments in the South were abolished.
2. That the South was to be divided into five military districts under the command of a brigadier-general, who was to enforce martial law. (This was armed revolutionary dictatorship.)
3. That Negroes be enfranchised.
4. That leading Confederates be disfranchised.
5. That new Constitutional Conventions be called to frame new state constitutions embodying universal manhood suffrage; this constitu-



tion to be approved by majority of citizens and by Congress.

6. States to be admitted only after ratification of 14th Amendment, and only after Amendment ratified by necessary number of states to become law.

d. Congress passed measures to limit the power of Johnson and finally tried to impeach him.

1. Passed Tenure-of-Office bill, forbidding President to remove office holders except with consent of Senate; passed bill depriving president of authority to pardon Confederates; passed bill forbidding president to issue military orders except through the head of the Army (Grant, a radical Republican).

2. Attempted to impeach Johnson (a revolutionary measure). The trial was March to May, 1868. Impeachment proceedings failed by small margin.

e. Congress passed the 15th Amendment (1869) which provided for Negro suffrage. This amendment reads: "Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any State, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

f. Congress passed the Enforcement Acts (1870 and 1871) to suppress the Klan and protect Negro rights:

1. Enforcement Act of 1870 penalized state officers and any person who attempted to deprive citizens of the suffrage and their civil rights and authorized the president to use the armed forces to do so.

2. Enforcement Act of February 1871 gave federal officers and courts control over registration and election in congressional elections.

g. Congress passed the Ku Klux Act (April 1871) which gave the federal government power to suppress conspiracies threatening political and civil rights, characterized such combinations as rebellion against the United States, and empowered the president to suspend protection of habeas corpus in the affected districts.

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Reading: Allen; pp. 79-90 and Appendices 4, 6, and 7.

On the action of the Douglass delegation against the compromise in the 14th Amendment: Douglass: Life and Times, pp. 469 - 471.

## 9. Organization of the Southern Negroes and Progressive Southern Whites

a. The Union Leagues (sometimes called the Loyal Leagues) were composed in the South chiefly of Negroes, but also of white Republicans. These were organized at first in the North, during the Civil War, by radical Republicans. Then they took root in the South, from 1863 on, among the whites opposing the slavocracy. The Leagues spread south with the army, and included: Union ele-

ments of border states, loyal whites of lower South, Federal army officers, and officials of the Freedmen's Bureau. In 1866, about 1/3 of the whites in the upland areas were in the Union Leagues. Negroes, especially after 1865, joined the Union Leagues. Thus the Leagues were organizational centers of the popular movement, like the Jacobin clubs in the French revolution. The Leagues entered into the struggle for the land. They also defended the Negroes attempting to vote, and protected Negro schools, meetings, conventions, and churches.

b. The Republican Party formed southern state organizations in 1867 and 1868. The platforms demanded universal education, Negro suffrage, and other democratic rights, and (sometimes) abolition (though not confiscation) of the large estates. Within the Republican Party, the Negroes pressed their independent demands, especially for land.

c. The Negro militias and rifle companies were formed around the core of demobilized Negro soldiers. They were a sort of Citizens' Army. They helped protect the Negro vote and worked against the K.K.K. and other terrorist bands.

These organizations aided in the preparation for the new Constitutional Conventions; they helped to mobilize the Negro masses to vote for the conventions, which they did overwhelmingly in spite of terrorism.

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Reading: Allen: pp. 91-102 and Appendix 3

#### 10. The New Electorate; Position of the Poor Whites

a. Registration for the election of the new Constitutional Conventions produced a new electorate of over 700,000 Negroes and 660,000 whites in the ten rebel states. The Negro registration alone almost equalled the total vote in these states (720,000) in 1860. The number of Confederate leaders disqualified is estimated at about 200,000. This was the first democratic electorate in the South.

b. The white small land-owning class opposed the Johnsonian state governments of 1865-66 and exerted a democratic influence. They even forced through a few democratic reforms. Throughout reconstruction (both periods) they were opposed to the reestablishment of political power based on the large landed estates.

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Reading: Allen: Latter half of Chapter V, pp. 102-115.

#### 11. The Constitutional Conventions

a. The new Constitutional Conventions elected under the Reconstruction Acts were the first representative peoples' assemblies to meet in the South. They were also the first state assemblies in which Negroes participated as elected representatives of the people.

b. Composition of the Constitutional Conventions:

<u>According to Race</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>% of Negroes</u>
South Carolina	76	48	61
Louisiana	49	49	50
Florida	18	27	40
Virginia	25	80	24
Georgia	33	137	19
Alabama	18	90	17
Mississippi	17	83	17
Arkansas	8	58	12
North Carolina	15	118	11
Texas	9	81	10

Note: Only in South Carolina and Louisiana did the Negro people participate in proportion to their ratio in the population or in the electorate.

2. According to class: Most of the Negro delegates had been slaves. The delegates, both Negro and white, were mostly agrarian. The whites were mostly up-country farmers.

There was also some representation from the urban middle class: lawyers, physicians, ministers, etc., and some white-collar workers. There were also a few city workers.

3. According to sectional origin: In South Carolina, of 124 delegates, at least 70 were Negro and white southerners. In Mississippi only about 20 of the 100 delegates were northerners. This proportion was typical.

c. New Constitutions were written by these Constitutional Conventions. Their main new features were:

1. Universal manhood suffrage, including Negroes.
2. Disfranchisement and barring from office of leaders of the Confederacy.
3. No property qualifications for office.
4. Apportionment of representation to the Lower House by population, not by property as under slavery.
5. No imprisonment for debt.
6. Universal public education.
7. More rights for women, including right to a divorce, and right to hold own property. (In Georgia the proposal was made to extend suffrage to women, but failed to pass. However, this was the first time a legislative body in America had seriously discussed such a question.)
8. Election, instead of appointment, of all county officials.
9. In some states, laws were passed to insure equal rights in conveyances.

d. The land question in the constitutional conventions:

Take South Carolina as an example. Although radical land reform (confiscation) was not proposed, the cry for the partition of the large estates was raised again and again. The proposal to sell out the large plantation owners was repeated often.

The convention legislated in favor of the small farmers and thus established a basis for cooperation between the black Belt and the uplands. It exempted from forced sale all lands and buildings valued below \$1000, and provided that state lands be sold in tracts not exceeding 160 acres to all classes of the community.

e. These constitutions were adopted after severe struggle and all states were readmitted by 1870.

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Reading: Allen; pp. 116-131

## 12. The Reconstruction Legislatures ("Black Parliaments")

a. Negro representation in the new governments; Although there was a great gain, representation from the Negroes was still insufficient, according to their ratio in the population.

Class composition of the Negro officials; Some northerners, who had been trained in the Abolition movement. Some northern soldiers, ministers, teachers, and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau. Some who had been free colored men of property under slavery. Some Negro mechanics and artisans. But the majority were former slaves.

The most important Negro officials were:

1. In State Legislatures; In South Carolina, Negroes were the great majority in the lower house of the three legislatures which sat between 1868 and 1873, and a very large minority of the lower houses which sat between 1874 and 1878. Representation in the state legislatures of other states was considerably less.

2. State officers other than in legislatures;

South Carolina: Lieutenant-Governor (twice)  
Speakers of the House (twice)  
Secretary of State  
Adjutant and Inspector-General

Louisiana: Acting Governor (in interim of 43 days --  
this was Lt.-Gov. P.B.S. Pinchback)  
Lieutenant-Governors (three)  
Secretary of State  
State Treasurer  
Superintendent of Public Education

Mississippi: Secretary of State  
Lieutenant-Governor  
Superintendent of Education

and others in other states.

3. Negro members of Congress; from 1868 to 1901, a total of 23, of whom two were Senators. Many of these served in more than one Congress. Some were several times reelected.

Senators: Hiram R. Revels, Mississippi  
Blanche K. Bruce, Mississippi

Representatives: South Carolina (8): Joseph H. Rainey, Robert C. Delarge, Robert B. Elliott, Richard H. Cain, A.J. Ransier, Robert Smalls, Thomas H. Miller, George M. Murray.

North Carolina: (4): John Hyman, James E. O'Harra, H.P. Cheatham, George H. White.

Alabama (3): Benjamin S. Turner, James T. Rapier, Jeremiah Haralson.

Louisiana: (2): J.H. Menard, Charles E. Nash.

Georgia (1): Jefferson Long.

Florida (1): Josiah T. Walls.

Mississippi (1): John R. Lynch.

Virginia (1): John M. Langston.

4. Negroes were also represented in local affairs. They were councilmen, aldermen, sheriffs, etc. At Natchez, Miss., the sheriff, county treasurer and assessor, the majority of the magistrates, and all the officers managing county affairs except one, were Negroes. At Beaufort, S.C., the city hall was entirely controlled by Negroes and the magistrates, the police and the representatives of the Legislature were practically all Negroes.

b. Work of the Reconstruction Legislatures. This covered chiefly:

1. Civil rights, especially for Negroes, Black Codes repealed. Civil rights bills passed to enforce equal rights for Negroes on conveyances and in public institutions.

2. Establishment of common school systems (for the first time in the South).

3. Revision of the tax system in the direction of greater democracy; uniform evaluation of all property. Under slave system, slave owners hardly taxed at all and merchants, bankers, professionals, and workers heavily taxed.

4. Reorganization of state and county governments in the direction of greater democracy.

5. Land and labor relations.

6. Aid to railroads and other capitalist undertakings.

c. Attitude of legislatures to whites. The working class and farming whites received benefits from the Reconstruction legislatures that they had never received from the slave owners' legislatures. Among the benefits were:

1. Reorganization of county lines to give the up-country whites fuller representation (this had long been denied them by the planters).

2. A system of public schools.

3. Extended rights for women (divorce, right to hold property).

4. Exemption of small farms (which belonged mostly to the whites) from forced sale whenever their valuation was under \$1000.

5. General suffrage and chance to hold office (no property qualifications for office; pay for officials).

This is part of the answer to the question; what would happen to the whites in the Black Belt if there were right of self-determination, with the Negro majority in charge.

d. Finances of the Reconstruction governments. The charge of corruption and extravagance is often made. The expenditures of these governments were not extravagant when the following is considered:

1. The slave owners' state had almost no public functions -- it supported no schools, trained no teachers, built few universities, built almost no hospitals or insane asylums, carried on no work of relief, etc., -- and could, therefore, be conducted very cheaply. Its legislators were not paid because they were all wealthy land owners. The new peoples' legislatures took on the functions which popular government is supposed to have.

2. There were attempts by the land owners to organize boycotts of taxes, etc., in order to disrupt finances.

3. These efforts at disruption were assisted by the northern bankers, who refused loans and credit.

On these last points, a brief quotation from the Floridan, 1871: "No greater calamity could befall the state of Florida, while under the rule of its present officials, than to be placed in good financial credit. Our only hope is the state's utter financial bankruptcy, and Heaven grant that may speedily come."

e. The "carpet-baggers" and the "scalawags."

These were the slave owners' derisive terms. The men called carpet-baggers were former soldiers and officers, staying in connection with the army and the Freedmen's Bureau; teachers, social workers, doctors, nurses, and ordinary business men seeking investment.

The scalawags were white workers or farmers who supported the Reconstruction governments. Albert Parsons, one of the leaders of the eight-hour movement, and one of the Haymarket martyrs, started his political life as a Texas "scalawag."

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Reading: Allen; pp. 131-144

W.E.B. DuBois; Black Reconstruction. Chapter on South Carolina

### 13. The Supreme Court in the Reconstruction Era

The Supreme Court regularly declared unconstitutional radical legislation designed to give civil and political rights to Negroes, and it also so interpreted the 14th and 15th Amendments as to render them of little practical use to the Negro people. Among the cases which it decided in this period were:

1. Case of Texas vs. White. Court said that southern states had retained their statehood intact (i.e., they were still sovereign states and Congress was not justified in treating them as conquered territory).

2. The McCardle case; Congress had passed the Reconstruction Acts, putting the South under martial law. William McCardle was arrested in Mississippi, charged with attacks in the newspaper of which he was editor, on military officers of the federal government stationed in the South. McCardle appealed to the Supreme Court for a writ of habeas corpus. To prevent the court from interfering, Congress in 1868 passed an act repealing certain sections of the judicial act of 1789 allowing such appeals to the Supreme Court. When the McCardle case came up in 1868, the Supreme Court was forced to admit that Congress had the power of regulating its jurisdiction and dismissed the case.

3. In the so-called Slaughterhouse Cases, appealed from New Orleans, the question at issue was whether the fundamental civil rights are attributes of state or federal citizenship, if they are attributes of federal officials and courts. This involved the question of whether the state had the right to pass legislation curtailing civil rights of the citizens. The Supreme Court decided that the fundamental civil rights are attributes of state, and not federal citizenship. The intent of the framers of the 14th amendment was to put all such rights under protection of the federal government. The Supreme Court said: "Such a construction (that civil rights are attributes of federal citizenship) should constitute this court a perpetual censor upon all legislation of the states, on the civil rights of their own citizens, with authority to nullify such as it did not approve." This decision took the teeth out of the 14th Amendment in actual practice.

4. The Civil Rights Bill. This bill, passed by Congress, provided: "That all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement." The question involved was, could Congress make it an offense against the 14th Amendment to deprive citizens of equal accommodation in public places, conveyances, etc. The Supreme Court decided that the Civil Rights Bill was unconstitutional; that these rights are administered by individuals, whereas the 14th Amendment can cover only those administered by states.

5. Case of Plessy vs. Ferguson. A Negro had appealed against a Jim-Crow railroad act of the Louisiana legislature, claiming that this violated the 14th Amendment. The court held that state enactments requiring whites and Negroes to ride in separate railroad cars did not violate the 14th Amendment.

6. Case of L. and N. Railroad vs. Schmidt. The Court said that a state could curtail the right of trial by jury without violating the 14th Amendment.

7. Case of U.S. vs Cruikshank. The defendants had been indicted for violation of the Congressional Enforcement Act (designed to enforce the Reconstruction Acts and the 14th Amendment). They had been arrested for intimidating and threatening Negroes. The Court decided that the rights of the Negroes involved were state rights and were not protected by the Constitution of the United States. It decided that "sovereignty for the protection of rights of life and personal liberty within the states rests alone with the states." This

meant that federal officials and courts could not step in if Negroes were intimidated or their rights abridged.

8. Case of Davidson vs. New Orleans. In this case again the Court declared that the 14th Amendment has no reference to the conduct of individual to individual, but only of the state to the individual. It declined to give protection of the federal government to Negro rights.

9. The K.K.K. law. This was a law passed by Congress to crush the Klan. Under it, a group of people who had almost lynched a Negro in Tennessee were indicted in Federal court. The Supreme Court said that the K.K.K. law was unconstitutional and that such offenses as lynching are not indictable in federal courts under the 14th Amendment.

10 Case of U.S. vs. Reese. The state election inspectors at Lexington, Ky., refused to count the vote of a Negro. They were indicted under the Enforcement Act to enforce the 15th Amendment. The Court decided that suffrage rights are not protected by the United States, the federal officials and courts, or the 15th Amendment.

11. Ex Parte Garland. Congress had passed a law that no one should practice in the federal courts without having taken an oath of loyalty. The Court declared the law unconstitutional.

12. Cummings vs. Missouri. The question involved was, did the state governments of the reconstructed states have the right to demand the loyalty oath of attorneys. The Court said no.

13. Clyatt vs. U.S. A white man had been found guilty of keeping Negroes in virtual slavery in Florida. The Court overthrew the decision of the lower courts and thus sanctioned peonage.

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Reading: No references.

#### 14. The Counter-Revolution: Its Causes

The restoration of the rule of the white landowners in the South, culminating in 1877, was a counter-revolution. The following were the main causes that brought about the counter-revolution:

1. The planters succeeded in splitting the poorer whites from the Negroes, raising the slogan of "white superiority."

2. The coalition of classes which formed the Radical Republican group was broken. The bourgeoisie was not merely the bearer of progress in the South; it was also an already highly developed exploiting class. In the North and East, it was intensely corrupt (Tweed Ring, Whiskey Scandal, Credit Mobilier). Labor and the farmers began to oppose Republican rule. By 1872 there was a complete rupture between the two wings of the Republican Party, the industrial-financial oligarchy and the old middle-class Abolition democracy. This latter class, under the leadership of such men as Carl Schurz, Charles Sumner, and Horace Greeley led the split, taking up the cause of labor, of the tax-payers against the swindlers, of farmers against railroads, etc. But this threw the group into the arms of the reaction, because they did not at the same time



make common cause with the revolutionary forces of the South, especially the Negro people. The Democrats supported the liberal Republican ticket in 1872. It was defeated, and Grant was reelected.

3. The attitude of the big bourgeoisie itself began to change. It wanted social peace to get the full benefits of the plantation system and the new internal market. It also feared the rise of labor, the movement of women for the ballot, the struggles of the farmers. They were willing to strike a bargain with the ex-slave-owners in order to get peace.

4. A new middle class arose in the South -- manufacturers, cotton brokers, merchants, etc. This was intimately connected with the plantation system. They led a revolt against the Republican Party in the South, calling themselves Liberal Republicans. This reform movement drew the native whites out of the Republican Party.

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References for this and Section 15: Allen; pp. 181-206

### 15. Events of the Counter-Revolution

1. Passage of the Amnesty Act by Congress, 1872. It removed political disabilities from the leaders of the slavocracy. It gave them the right to hold office.

2. Gradually, the reaction got control, first in one section, then in another. Radicals were often driven out by terror and force. The federal government failed to act for Negro rights.

3. The K.K.K. was formed, as the extra-legal arm of the counter-revolution. Its function was to terrorize the Republican whites and the Negroes, and prevent the masses from exercising political rights.

4. Rutherford B. Hayes, Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1876, won the election by betraying the Negro people. Very many states had contested electoral votes. Hayes made a deal with the Democrats, promising to restore white planter rule in the South.

5. Hayes withdrew the federal troops from the South (1877) and the counter-revolution was complete.

6. Then came the disarming of the Negro people, the installation of white primary systems, the grandfather clauses and other methods of disfranchisement (such as the poll tax), control by the whites of every major and minor phase of life and activity. The election districts in the South were gerrymandered to give the bourbons a majority, thus further splitting up the state unity of the Black Belt.

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Reading: Allen; pp. 181-206.

## 16. Unfinished Tasks of the Civil War and Reconstruction

There are many unfinished tasks of the "second American revolution." This was because the bourgeoisie turned from its revolutionary path before it had completed its tasks. Many of the jobs it did not finish have come down as tasks of the democratic front and people's front. While no complete list of such tasks may be drawn up, we may mention especially the following:

1. The Negro question. The failure to distribute land to the freedmen, the failure to assure complete equality to the Negro people, the continuance of the Black Belt as a prison-house of the Negroes, gives us the Negro question as we have it today. The Negro people of the U.S. are an oppressed nation because their liberation was not completed by the Civil War and Reconstruction.
2. The plantation system in the South continues, because the big plantations were not confiscated and their land distributed among the landless. Such a distribution would have laid the basis for economic democracy in the South. The land and its ownership is a basic problem of the South, and the existence of share-cropping, etc., arises out of this problem.
3. National unity. The United States has never become a completely unified nation, the process of national unification has never been wholly completed. The South remains a more or less separated portion of the country, different in many respects from other sections, with a lower living standard, special forms of oppression, lack of democracy, and so on.
4. Wage differentials between the North and South came into existence before the Civil War as an outcome of slavery. They remain because the remnants of slavery still exist in the South. They are among the most important difficulties that a labor movement of America has to cope with.
5. Democracy for the South. Civil rights for both Negro and white in the South are impaired by the remnants of the slave system. These include suffrage (the poll tax is today the main point of attack on this question); right of jury service; right of assemblage, petition, press, organization.
6. Continuation of violence -- lynching, murder, etc. -- in the South, a continuation of the traditions of the pre-Civil War period.
7. We may sum up this question by mentioning that the South is the nation's No. 1 economic problem -- as it was in the pre-Civil War period.
8. The power of reaction in the Democratic Party, exercised especially through southern politicians of the old line, such as Vice-President John Garner, Senator Carter Glass, etc., etc., is an important factor of present-day politics, a remnant of the period when the Democratic Party was the party of reaction because it was the party of the slave-holders.

## X. THE NEGROES AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT, 1876 to 1918

### 1. General Introduction

The American labor movement sprang into new life immediately after the Civil War. With chattel slavery abolished, the stage was cleared for the struggle of the two main combatants of the age, the capitalists and the working class.

In Capital (Vol. 1, Chapter 10) Marx wrote of this as follows:

"In the United States of America, any sort of independent labor movement was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the republic. Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a black skin is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new and vigorous life sprang. The first fruit of the Civil War was an agitation for the eight-hour day -- a movement which ran with express speed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California."

The main issue of the labor movement at this time was the eight-hour day. It was in this period that labor first organized nationally; the first national labor federations were formed.

The establishment of a labor press; pressure for money reform; and the first strivings towards independent political action, also marked the labor movement of this period.

## 2. The National Labor Union.

The first of the national labor federations was the National Labor Union. Its first national congress took place in 1866 in Baltimore. The main issue was the eight-hour day.

The National Labor Union marked the appearance of the working class as a really independent force in American life. William Sylvis, president of the N.L.U. and one of the most advanced labor leaders of the period, wrote in one of the N.L.U. circulars:

"The working people of our nation, black and white, male and female, are sinking to a condition of serfdom. Even now a slavery exists in our land worse than ever existed under the old slave system. The center of the slave power no longer exists South of Mason and Dixon's line. It has been transferred to Wall Street; its vitality is to be found in our huge national bank swindle and a false monetary system. The war abolished the right of property in man, but it did not abolish slavery. This movement we are now engaged in is the great anti-slavery movement, and we must push on the work of emancipation until slavery is abolished in every corner of our country."

The N.L.U. and the Negro: There were many more skilled Negro workers in the South than in the North. The Negro's main problem was to break down the barriers against him in the skilled trades.

In its first Address to the Workingmen of the United States, the N.L.U. declared:

"The systematic organization and consolidation of labor must henceforth become the watchword of the true reformer. To accomplish this the cooperation of the African race in America must be secured. What is wanted then is for every union to help inculcate the grand, ennobling idea that the interests of labor are one, but aside from this, the working men of the United States have a social interest in seeking their cooperation....Their moral influence, and their strength at the ballot box would be of incalculable value to the cause of

labor. Can we afford to reject their proffered cooperation and make them enemies? By committing such an act of folly we would inflict greater injury upon the cause of Labor Reform than the combined efforts of capital could accomplish. Their cherished idea of antagonism between white and black labor would be realized, and as the Austrian despotism makes use of the hostility between the different races...to maintain her existence and her balance, so capitalists, north and south, would foment discord between the whites and blacks, and hurl the one against the other...to maintain their ascendancy and continue the reign of oppression."

At the second N.L.U. Congress (1867) the practical problem of organizing Negro workers led to lengthy debate. The committee appointed on this question said that the matter was too complicated and proposed to postpone consideration until next year. President Sylvis opposed the motion, saying: "...This question has already been introduced in the South, the whites striking against the blacks, and creating an antagonism which will kill off the trade unions, unless the two can be consolidated." Some delegates wanted the Negroes to enter the same unions with the whites, but the delegates from the border states wanted separate unions. The committee finally stated: "...The constitution already adopted by the labor Congress precludes the necessity of any action of this body in behalf of any particular class of the laboring masses."

This was, of course, an evasion of the question, and the question was similarly evaded at the next congress in 1868.

At the 1869 congress there were four Negro delegates, from Negro unions of caulkers, molders, painters, engineers, laborers, and hod carriers. The Negroes were seated without objection, even southern delegates voting for them.

Isaac Meyers, delegate of the Colored Caulkers' Trade Union of Baltimore, spoke at this congress. He was the outstanding Negro labor leader of this period. He said in part:

"Silent, but powerful and far-reaching, is the revolution inaugurated by your act in taking the colored laborer by the hand and telling him that his interest is common with yours....Slavery, or slave labor, is no more, and it is the proud boast of my life that the slave himself had a share in striking off the one end of the fetters that bound him by the ankle, and the other end that bound you by the neck."

He demanded the right of the Negroes to work on a basis of equality, and pledged the solidarity of Negro labor to the general movement. The congress adopted a resolution on Negro labor which said that "the National Labor Union knows no North, no South, no East, no West, neither color nor sex on the question of the rights of labor, and urges our colored fellow members to form organizations in all legitimate ways, and send their delegates from every state in the Union to the next congress."

The Labor Party Question and the N.L.U.: At the 1870 (and last) Convention of the N.L.U., steps were taken to organize a Labor Reform Party. This led to a debate on the Negro question. There was a question whether to grant the floor to J.F. Langston, Negro Reconstruction leader. At the first congress of the Colored National Labor Union (see next section for discussion of this)

Langston had spoken for continued loyalty to the Republican Party. Langston was finally denied the floor.

There was considerable disagreement on the question of independent political action, and Negro delegates were among those who opposed it. Isaac Meyers was one of those who spoke against it. However, some Negro delegates voted for the formation of the Labor Reform Party, the motion for which was carried 60 to 5.

It was in large part the failure of the N.L.U. to take a more advanced position on Negro labor, to demand democratic rights for the Negroes, and to recognize the special needs of the Negro in industry that led to the negative attitude of many of the Negro leaders on the labor party question and kept them tied to the Republican Party. In Reconstruction, James Allen writes:

"Negro labor did not cut itself loose from the Republican Party because at that time it best represented the interests of the Negro people in Reconstruction. Adherence to the Republicans was the political expression of the alliance of the Negro people with the bourgeoisie in the transformation of the South. The working class, even as represented in the advanced National Labor Union, did not prove politically mature enough to write upon its own banner the democratic demands of the Negroes. It was too much to expect, as did Cummings and other advocates of independent labor politics, that the Negro workers would support a labor party which did not at the same time incorporate in its program the most pertinent demands of the Negro masses, such as the protection of civil rights and equal opportunity to work at equal wages. Negro labor would not abandon the party which had won its faith precisely because that party had fought for their rights, nor would they align themselves with a labor party which did not fully recognize the special demands of the Negro.

"Labor leaders like Meyers looked with distrust upon the third party because they feared that it might imperil the victory of the Republicans and thereby the gains already made by the Negro people.

"The National Labor Union reached a high level in the development of an independent working-class policy, which was undermined by agrarian greenbackism. Its collapse was in no little measure also caused by the failure to grasp the revolutionary significance of Reconstruction in the South and to utilize the full possibilities it offered for an alliance with the Negro people and the middle classes."

### 3. The Colored National Labor Union

There were a number of Negro unions, both South and North, in this period. In the South, the Negroes played a more militant role in forming unions than the whites. There were a number of strikes in which Negro workers took part, either separately or side by side with white workers. The first national Negro labor convention was held in Washington, in December, 1869. The leaders of the movement made it clear that they did not wish to organize separately from the whites; they were doing so only because they were barred from the general trade unions in many cases. The call to the first Colored National Labor Union said that its object was to "...Consolidate the colored working men of the several states to act in cooperation with our white fellow

workingmen in every state and territory of the Union, who are opposed to distinction in the apprenticeship laws on account of color, and to so act cooperatively until the necessity for separate organization shall be deemed unnecessary."

There were 203 delegates to the first convention, 54 from the South. This was not strictly a labor convention; only a few delegates were workers, and there were only a few unions represented.

The question arose of seating McLane, president of the National Plasterers' Union. There was opposition on the ground that he was for the Labor Party. The chief opponent of admitting McLane was the Reconstruction leader, J.F. Langston. But other Negro labor leaders were in favor of admitting McLane. Allen, in Reconstruction, writes:

"George T. Downing of Rhode Island, who was acting chairman, sharply rebuked Langston for his speech, ordered the admission of McLane, and appealed to the white workers for unity in a common cause. He recognized the part played by the Republican Party and conceded it 'respect and support in view of its agency in freeing us from that degradation.' But his support was not unstinted; 'We think that it should have been more consistent, more positive in its dealings with our and the country's enemies.....We should be secured in the soil, which we have enriched in our toil and to which we have a double entitlement.' Meyers and Sella Martin, of Massachusetts, also criticized Langston and appealed to the white and black workers to work harmoniously together in the cause of labor."

The discussion at the congress concerned especially land, civil and political rights, and education. The congress protested discrimination in the labor unions. This first Congress also designated Sella Martin as delegate to the International Labor Congress in Paris, in 1870.

The second convention took place in 1871. Separate organization was opposed and an appeal made for cooperation between white and Negro labor. The congress pledged support to the Republican Party, as did the next congress in 1871 and the final congress which met at New Orleans in 1872. At the second congress Frederick Douglass was elected president.

Allen makes the following estimate of the C.N.L.U.:

"The Colored National Labor Union was neither a trade union body nor a political class organization. The platform exhibits great confusion on the labor question and reflects the urgency of the democratic needs of the people. The convention was really a Negro people's assembly and the organization created by it can be characterized as a broad Negro congress encompassing the pressing needs of all strata of the people. But it was the first Negro congress in which labor was represented as such and exerted some independent influence....Its significance rests in the fact that it was the first national organization of the Negro people in the new period....As it became more and more an appendage of the Republican Party, the Colored National Labor Union disintegrated quickly."

The National Labor Union sent representatives to conventions of the Colored N.L.U.

The outstanding Negro labor leaders of this period were Isaac Meyers,

Sella Martin, and George Downing. Meyers was at one time president of the C.N.L.U.

#### 4. The First International

The International Workingmen's Association (First International) was created in London in 1864. An American section was formed, chiefly of the German Socialist groups. Allen gives the following account of their activity in respect to the Negro people:

"These advanced German workers combined their agitation for an independent political party of the working class with demands for Negro rights. The first political party of the workers based on Socialist ideas was the Social Party of New York and vicinity, formed by the amalgamation of the Communist Club and the General German Labor Association. In its platform, presented at a mass meeting in New York on January 20, 1868, two planks having direct bearing upon the Negro were included. One demanded the repeal of all discriminatory laws and the other favored the eligibility of all citizens of the United States for office. This was the first time in the new period that a working-class organization raised the question of equal rights. The party was soon dissolved in favor of the Labor Reform Party announced by the National Labor Union.

"Section 1 of New York was the most active body of the First International in the United States. The section was also affiliated to the National Labor Union as Labor Union No. 5. It formed a link between the national organization of American labor and the international labor movement. Its activities with regard to the Negro reveal a clear consciousness of the role demanded of the white workers in establishing solidarity between white and black labor. In a report to President Trevellick of the National Labor Union by F.A. Sorge, the outstanding early Socialist leader, it was stated that Labor Union No. 5 was endeavoring to spread the movement among the labor organizations of the Negroes and other nationalities in New York.

"This was no idle boast....In October, 1869, Section 1 appointed a committee to found trade unions among the Negro workers. Results were quick, for only two weeks later a delegation of Negro workers appeared before the section to thank them for their cooperation and to report that a trade union of 90 members had already been formed. The following February, when the Negro union was unable to obtain a hall, the section provided one. Next month, Section 1 gained the admittance of the Negro labor unions of the city to the Workingmen's Union, the central city labor body.

"The activities of the International among the Negro workers led to their participation in the great eight-hour movement in New York City. On September 13, 1871, 20,000 workers marched in the eight-hour parade, called by the Workingmen's Union, which inaugurated extensive strikes in the city for the shorter workday. Negro members of a waiters' union and Negro plasterers from Brooklyn marched with the I.W.A. sections. ...When the procession reached City Hall, where 5,000 awaited it, the Negro section was greeted with applause.

"Shortly after, on December 18, 1871, a company of Negro militia, the Skidmore Guard, participated in a demonstration called by the Inter-

nationals to protest the execution of three leading Parisian Communards."

It was a section of the I.W.A. which nominated Frederick Douglass for vice-president in 1872, together with Victoria Woodhull, woman's rights leader, for the presidency. But this was a split-off, or renegade, section of the First International. These sections of the I.W.A. which took part in the nominating convention (New York, 1872) later withdrew. The ticket was not actually run in the elections.

#### 5. The Industrial Brotherhood

The N.L.U. died in 1872. The Industrial Brotherhood, a national union organization, was formed in 1873, but was swept away in the great crisis of that year, and held its last session in 1875. As far as can be learned, no special reference was made to the question of Negro labor, nor were there any Negro delegates to the congresses.

#### 6. The Knights of Labor

The Knights of Labor was a nation-wide federation of unions in America, which took a militant position both in theory and practice on the Negro question.

The Knights of Labor was founded secretly in 1869. Its moving spirit was Uriah Stephens. It came above ground in 1878 and grew rapidly thereafter. It attempted to organize both skilled and unskilled, and included even the unorganized in the Local Assembly, the local group of the Knights of Labor.

At the 1886 convention, the general secretary-treasurer said that "rapid strides have been made in the South, especially in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama. The colored people of the South are flocking to us, being eager for organization and education."

There were Negro groups affiliated with the Knights of Labor in many southern states. It has been estimated that in 1886 there were 60,000 Negroes in the Knights.

On several occasions, the Knights showed that they meant what they said in respect to equality for the Negro workers. This period of organization has been designated as one of great good feeling between Negro and white labor. A Negro, Frank J. Ferrell, introduced Terence V. Powderly, the head of the Knights, at the General Assembly in Richmond in 1886. Powderly said during his speech:

"When it became necessary to seek quarters for a delegation to this city, and when it became known that there was a man among them of a darker hue than the rest, it became evident that some of these men could not find a place in the hotels of this city, which is in accordance with long and established customs, and customs are not readily vanquished. Therefore, when one that happened to be of a dark skin of a delegation of some sixty or seventy men, could not gain admission to the hotel where accommodations for the delegation had been engaged, rather than separate from that brother, they stood by the principles of our organization, which recognized no color or creed in the division



of men. The majority of these men went with their colored brother. I made the selection of that man from that delegation to introduce me during the address of his Excellency Governor Lee, so that it may go forth from here to the entire world that 'we practice what we preach.'"

At this same convention, a theater party from among the delegates refused seats because Ferrell was not admitted. Of course, all this brought howls from the Richmond press.

The Knights urged one of its organizations in Maryland to bring Negro apprentices into mechanical work, and also notified Texas groups that they must treat colored members respectfully.

### 7. The American Federation of Labor

Those unions which repudiated political action formed the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada in 1881. Out of this grew the A.F. of L., which had its first convention as such in 1886. This soon superseded the Knights of Labor.

The fact that the A.F. of L. from the beginning was a craft organization of skilled workers only hit the Negro masses even harder than the whites, because the Negroes were barred from the skilled trades.

A large number of the unions affiliated with the A.F. of L. excluded Negroes, either by provisions in the constitution or in the ritual, or simply in actual practice.

The early change in the A.F. of L. in regard to Negro labor is described by Spero and Harris in their book, The Black Worker:

"At the convention in 1893, the Federation resolved: 'We here and now reaffirm as one of the cardinal principles of the labor movement that the working people must unite and organize irrespective of creed, color, sex, nationality, or politics.' For a time one of the conditions of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor was the taking of an oath not to discriminate against a fellow workman because of race. One of the early pamphlets published by the Executive Council contained this statement: 'The American Federation of Labor does not draw the color line nor do its affiliated national and international unions. A union that does cannot be admitted into affiliation with this body.' Before long, however, the heads of the Federation came to realize that this ideal was standing in the way of its expansion."

Thus the International Association of Machinists was admitted in 1895, although a pledge in the ritual bound each member to propose only white men for membership. The same method of discrimination was used by the Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders Union, which was admitted to the A.F. of L. in 1896. The A.F. of L. also admitted the Brotherhood of Railway Steamship Clerks and Freight Handlers, and the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, both in 1909, although their constitutions forbade membership to Negroes. Other instances could be cited.

Spero and Harris write:

"...As early as 1900 circumvention and opportunism were fast supplanting the courageous stand of the previous decade. In reporting to the 1900 convention the refusal of southern central bodies to seat Negro delegates, President Gompers pointed out that 'to insist...upon a delegation...of colored workers being accorded representation in a central body would have meant the dissolution of that organization.' ...The Executive Council was authorized to issue separate charters to local and federal labor unions, composed exclusively of colored workers where in the judgment of the Executive Council it appears advisable."

Over and over again, from the earliest days on down, the Negro delegates asked for Negro organizers and campaigns for organization of the Negro workers. However, little or nothing was done.

In 1918 a group of leading Negroes urged the A.F. of L. to pay greater attention to Negro labor. These were John R. Shillady, secretary to the N.A.A.C.P.; Fred Moore, editor of the New York Age; Emmett J. Scott, special assistant to the Secretary of War; Thomas Jesse Jones, educational director, Phelps Stokes Fund; Eugene Kinckle Jones, secretary of the National Urban League. These men conferred with the Council. Six months later, Jones wrote a letter to Gompers for the committee. The letter urged that the A.F. of L. recommend to discriminating unions that they revise their tactics and admit all equally. It urged also that a Negro organizer be employed by the A.F. of L. and that the committee meet with the A.F. of L. heads four times a year at least to check developments.

The A.F. of L. Executive answered this by saying that it could see nothing wrong with the past work of the Federation. Nothing further was done.

Sometimes A.F. of L. locals, etc., took definite anti-Negro actions. For instance, in East St. Louis, scene of a great race riot in 1917, the Central Trades and Labor Union, some months before the riot, added fuel to the flames by appealing for action against the "growing menace" of Negro labor.

Discrimination was particularly bad among the railway groups.

#### 8. The Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.)

The I.W.W. was formed in 1905. The following account of its attitude toward Negro labor is taken from Spero and Harris:

"At the founding of the I.W.W., William D. Haywood, the moving spirit of American syndicalism, said, 'The American Federation of Labor which presumes to be the labor movement of the country is not a working class movement. It doesn't represent the working class. There are organizations...affiliated with the A.F. of L. which in their constitutions and by-laws prohibit the initiation of or conferring the obligation on a colored man; that prohibit the conferring of the obligation on foreigners. What we want to establish at this time is a labor organization that will open wide its doors to every man that earns his livelihood either by his brain or his muscle....At the inception of the I.W.W., its constitution was made to provide that 'no working man or woman shall be excluded from membership in unions because of creed or color.'

"During the active part of its life, the I.W.W. issued about one million membership cards. About 100,000 of these cards were issued to Negroes. The important work of the I.W.W. among the Negro workers was in the southern lumber industry in Louisiana and Texas, and among Negro longshoremen and dock workers of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Norfolk, Virginia.

"In 1910 the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, an independent union, was begun in the lumber camps of Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas....It had about 35,000 members, about half of whom were Negroes. At the May, 1912, convention, the Brotherhood joined the I.W.W. Bill Haywood was present at the convention. When he inquired why no colored men were present, he was told that, because the Louisiana law prohibited meetings of white and black men, the Negroes were meeting in some other place. Haywood said: 'You are meeting in convention now to discuss the conditions under which you labor. This can't be done intelligently by passing resolutions here and then sending them out to another room for the black men to act upon. Why not be sensible about this and call the Negroes into this convention? If it is against the law, this is one time when the law should be broken.' The Negroes were asked to come and the mixed convention elected Negro and white delegates to the next I.W.W. convention."

Throughout its career, the I.W.W. practiced equality. Take as an instance the work of the Philadelphia Marine Transport Union (material from Spero and Harris):

"...The Philadelphia Marine Transport Workers Union called a strike in the spring of 1920 for an eight-hour day, forty-four-hour week, and increased pay. The call was answered by 5,500 dock workers; and shortly afterwards 3,200 sympathetic harbor workers joined their ranks. Fully 5,000 of these 8,700 workers were Negroes....Throughout the strike, white and black workers stood by the organization. Efforts to use strike breakers and to play one race against another were unsuccessful. The union was constantly alive to the danger of the latter issue and tried to guard against it by emphasizing its white-black character in its strike handbills and cartoons. One such cartoon which was widely circulated pictured a white worker and a black worker side by side, holding the ropes which tied up Philadelphia's shipping."

## 9. The Socialist Party

The early Socialist groups, under the direct guidance of Marx (through his friends, Sorge, Weydemeyer, and others in America) had a healthy attitude toward the Negro and fought against discrimination. This was in the pre-Civil War and immediate post-Civil War periods.

The Socialist Labor Party (formed in the nineties) and the Socialist Party, however, mechanically reasoned that no special appeal to the Negroes was necessary, nor need special demands be raised, because they should be treated just as other members of the working class. Of course, this meant in practice that the S.P. and the S.L.P. refused to take up the special demands of the Negro workers and Negro masses generally.

The Socialist Party was formed in 1901. Three Negro delegates were present. A resolution was adopted on the Negro, saying that the whole Negro problem was simply a class question, and inviting the Negroes to membership in the Socialist Party.

Eugene Debs said at one time: "We have nothing special to offer the Negro, and we cannot make separate appeals to all the races. The Socialist Party is the party of the working class, regardless of color." However, Debs in practice was more advanced than the other S.P. leaders, for he urged the unions to open their doors to Negro labor, and blamed the East St. Louis riots in part upon the failure of the unions there to take in Negro workers.

Other members of the S.P. fought for a more realistic policy, for taking up the special problems of the Negroes, and as a result some work was accomplished.

In 1917, the Messenger, edited by A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, became an avowed Socialist magazine among Negroes. Associated with Randolph and Owen were W.A. Domingo, William N. Colson, the Rev. George Frazier Miller, Richard Moore, and Cyril Briggs. The two last named are now in the Communist Party. The chief work of the Messenger was in the post-war period and should be discussed in that connection.

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Supplementary reading:

James Allen: Reconstruction, Chapter VI

Charles H. Wesley: Negro Labor in the United States, Chapters VI and IX

Spero and Harris: The Black Worker, Chapters II, III, IV, V, XV, XIX.

## XI. THE NEGRO FROM 1877 TO 1917 (EXCLUSIVE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT)

### 1. Development of the Negro Nation

It was during this period that the Black Belt finally took on all the characteristics of a nation. A common language, territory, culture, traditions had already been achieved. These continued: the territory of the Black Belt remained a territory of Negro majority, despite the migrations to the North. There now developed a common economic life; the group developed market relations and class differentiation among itself. It now became possible for a Negro to hire a Negro, to fire a Negro, buy from a Negro, sell to a Negro.

A Negro bourgeoisie and a Negro petty bourgeoisie developed. Negroes went into such businesses as real estate, hotel-keeping, cosmetics, banking (the Freedmen's Bank was created in 1865), textiles (the Coleman mill at Concord, N.C., started in 1897, was owned and operated by Negroes), restaurants, barber-shops, grocer shops, dry-goods stores, undertaking establishments. The Negroes also entered the professions during this time.

### 2. The Negro in Industry and Agriculture

There was much gain in the proportion of factory labor and industrial pursuits generally among Negroes in this period, particularly after the beginning of the World War in 1914. However, the chief occupations remained agriculture and domestic and personal service.

The Negro in agriculture continued subject to a system leading to peonage. Peonage is, legally, debt-slavery. This system of semi-slavery, designed to tie the Negro to the soil, began shortly after the Civil War, but

during the post-Reconstruction period it was immensely strengthened. This accounts for the fact that today, the land problem is still unsolved in the Black Belt. The method of peonage quickly came to be the share system, under which the cropper and landlord each undertake "mutual obligations." The landlord furnishes land and a specified number of tools, feed, work animals, seed, etc., and the cropper undertakes to furnish the rest of the means of production and the labor. For this, the landlord is to receive a specified portion of the crop. The cropper can buy food, clothing, etc., on credit at the company store, usually owned by the landlord. The landlord keeps accounts, as the croppers say, "with a crooked pencil," and at harvest time the share-cropper often comes out behind. This obligates him to stay on another year to work out the debt. Since the obligation of cropper and landlord to one another is a contract, it would be a breach of contract, under southern law, for the cropper to leave. The "jumping contract" laws of the South were passed and put into operation in this period.

The vagrancy laws were sharpened, so that when labor was needed, Negroes could be picked up on a vagrancy charge, and when their fines were paid by some planter he was privileged to make them work it out. By means of commissary accounting, it sometimes took years to work out a \$10 fine.

The convict lease system was also a fruit of this period.

### 3. Social Status

Disfranchisement: In all states of the South, political disfranchisement of the Negro had taken place, in practice, by 1910. In 1890, an amendment to the Mississippi state constitution excluded from suffrage anyone who had failed to pay a poll tax, or who was unable to read and interpret reasonably a section of the Constitution. South Carolina took similar steps in 1895. In 1898, Louisiana passed the first of the "grandfather clauses." These excluded from her disfranchisement provisions all descendants of people who had voted prior to the Civil War. That is, poll taxes had to be paid, literacy tests had to be passed by all would-be voters except those whose grandfathers had voted prior to 1860. Of course, only whites had voted prior to 1860, so these "grandfather clauses" excluded only Negroes. Disfranchisement steps of one kind or another were taken by North Carolina in 1900; Virginia and Alabama in 1901; Georgia in 1907, and Oklahoma in 1910.

In 1915, the Supreme Court of the United States declared the disfranchising clauses unconstitutional by voiding the Oklahoma "grandfather clause"; the decision, however, had little practical effect.

The development of the white Democratic primary system further deprived the Negro masses in the South of political rights.

This period of disfranchisement brought forward the new Negro-hating leaders of the South, whose chief aim was to split the union of poor whites and Negroes begun in Reconstruction days. These leaders were typified by Ben Tillman in South Carolina; James Vardaman in Mississippi; Hoke Smith in Georgia, and Carter Glass in Virginia.

Social Inequality: Jim-Crow laws were perfected in these years, applying to travel, assemblage, housing, restaurants, amusement centers, parks, schools, etc.

Violence; lynching: Lynching increased enormously after Reconstruction,

although even in Reconstruction it was a frequent occurrence. More than 3500 people were lynched between 1885 and 1915, most of these being southern Negroes. Some of the most horrible lynchings on record occurred at this time.

The following is taken from Benjamin Brawley's Social History of the American Negro:

"...Mob violence burst forth about the turn of the century with redoubled intensity.

"November was made red by election troubles in both North and South Carolina. In the latter state, at Phoenix, on November 8 and for some days thereafter, the Tolberts, a well-known family of white Republicans, were attacked by mobs and barely escaped alive. Thomas Tolbert...was attacked by Etheridge, the Democratic manager of another precinct. The Negroes came to Tolbert's defense, and in the fight that followed Etheridge was killed and Tolbert wounded. John Tolbert, coming up, was filled with buckshot. The Negroes were at length overpowered and the Tolberts forced to flee. All told, it appears that two white men and about twelve Negroes lost their lives in connection with this trouble, six of the latter being lynched on account of the death of Etheridge.

"On Tuesday, January 24, 1899, a fire in the center of town of Palmetto, Georgia, destroyed a hotel, two stores, and a storehouse. The next Saturday there was another fire....About the middle of March something overheard by a white citizen led to the implicating of nine Negroes. These men were arrested and confined for the night of March 15 in a warehouse to await trial the next morning. About midnight a mob came, pushed open the door, and fired two volleys at the Negroes, killing four immediately and fatally wounding four more.

"On August 23, 1899, at Darien, Ga., hundreds of Negroes, who for days had been aroused by rumors of a threatened lynching, assembled at the ringing of the bell of a church opposite the jail and by their presence prevented the removal of a prisoner. They were later tried for insurrection and twenty-one were sent to the convict farms for a year."

There were similar occurrences in New Orleans, New York, Springfield (Illinois) and many other places. In many instances the Negroes defended themselves. The worst of these riots was in Atlanta, Saturday, September 22, 1906, of which Brawley gives the following description:

"Throughout the summer the heated campaign of Hoke Smith for the governorship capitalized the gathering sentiment for the disfranchisement of the Negro in the state and at length raised the race issue to such a high pitch that it leaped into flame. The feeling was intensified by the report of assaults and attempted assaults by Negroes, particularly as these were detailed or magnified or even invented by an evening paper, the Atlanta News, against which the Fulton County Grand Jury afterwards brought in an indictment as largely responsible for the riot. On Friday, September 21, while a Negro was on trial, the father of the girl concerned asked the recorder for permission to deal with the Negro with his own hand, and an outbreak was barely averted in the open court. On Saturday evening, however, some elements in the city and from neighboring towns, heated by liquor and newspaper extras, became openly riotous and until midnight defied all law and authority. Negroes were assaulted wherever they appeared, for the most part being found unsuspecting. In one barber shop two workers were beaten to death. Another young Negro was stabbed with jack-knives. All together very nearly a score of per-

sons lost their lives and two or three times as many were injured. After some time Governor Terrell mobilized the militia, but the crowd did not take this move seriously and the real feeling of the mayor, who turned on the hose of the fire department, was shown by his statement that just so long as the Negroes committed certain crimes, just so long would they be unceremoniously dealt with. Throughout Monday night the union of some citizens with policemen who were advancing in a suburb in which most of the homes were those of Negroes, resulted in the death of James Heard, an officer, and the wounding of some of those who accompanied him. More Negroes were also killed. It was the disposition on the part of the Negroes to make armed resistance that really put an end to the massacre. Said A.J. McKelway: 'Tuesday every house in the town (i.e., the suburb referred to above) was entered by the soldiers, and some two hundred and fifty Negroes temporarily held, while the search was proceeding and inquiries being made. They were all disarmed, and those with concealed weapons, or under suspicion of having been in the party firing on the police, were sent to jail.' It is thus evident that the Negroes who had suffered most, not the white men who killed a score of them, were disarmed."

There were also riots in which white workers were incited against Negroes on the question of jobs. Such occurred in 1895 in New Orleans, around the question of dock labor; Birmingham, 1895 (mine work); Pana and Virden, Ill., 1898 (mine work); Atlanta, 1909 (railroad work). One of the most shameful occurrences was that at Brownsville, August 1906. Brawley writes:

"In August, 1906, Companies B, C, and D of the Twenty-Fifth Regiment, United States Infantry, were stationed at Fort Brown, Brownsville, Texas, where they were forced to exercise very great self-restraint in the face of daily insults from the citizens. On the night of the 13th occurred a riot in which one citizen of the town was killed, another wounded, and the chief of police injured. The people of the town accused the soldiers of causing the riot and demanded their removal. Brigadier-General E.A. Garlington recommended dishonorable discharge for the regiment. On this recommendation President Roosevelt on November 9 dismissed 'without honor' the entire battalion. The Senate authorized a general investigation. The case was finally disposed of by a congressional act approved March 3, 1909, which appointed a court of inquiry before which any discharged man who wished to reenlist had the burden of establishing his innocence -- a procedure which clearly violated the fundamental principle in law that a man is to be accounted innocent until he is proved guilty."

#### 4. The Philosophy of Booker T. Washington

Booker Washington (1895-1915) was educated at Hampton Institute, Virginia, and became president of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, from its inception. He worked out a philosophy of retreat from full equality, and acceptance for the Negro people of an inferior position. He also urged a special type of schooling for Negroes -- schooling for industrial and personal service and agriculture, instead of the general schooling given to white children and youths.

Washington's most famous speech is the one made at the Cotton States Exposition at Atlanta in 1895. He said in part:

"Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our new life we began at the top instead of at the bottom;

that a seat in Congress or the state legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill; that the political convention or stump speaking had more attractions than starting a dairy farm or truck garden...

"Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the production of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labor, and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and substantial....No race can prosper until it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top.

"To those of the white race...I would say...cast down your bucket among these (Negro) people who have, without strikes and labor wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests....In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

"The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing..It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of those privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house."

This was a repudiation of the struggle for political and social equality. After some years the Niagara and other movements arose to challenge this Uncle Tom philosophy (see below). But before passing to this matter, we must stop for a moment to consider the Negro's role in the Spanish-American war.

#### 5. The Spanish-American War

When the Spanish-American war broke out in 1898, there were four regiments of Negro regulars: the 24th and 25th Infantry, and the 9th and 10th Cavalry. Colored troops enlisted in many states. Outstanding among the Negro officers of this war were Major Charles E. Young and J.R. Marshall. At the battle of San Juan Hill, the troops under command of Colonel Theodore Roosevelt were saved from being wiped out by the arrival of the 10th (Negro) Cavalry. The 24th Infantry volunteered for service in a yellow-fever hospital. The Negro troops also took an important part in the fighting at Santiago.

#### 6. Reorganization for Equality; the Niagara Movement; the N.A.A.C.P.

New voices came to be heard for equal rights. An outstanding example was Monroe Trotter's militant editorship of the Boston Guardian. Boston became more or less a center of struggle; in 1903 there was even an attempt to break up a meeting addressed by Booker Washington. There were several state organizations dedicated to struggle for equality, notable among them the Georgia Equal Rights Association.

The Niagara movement was founded in 1905 at Niagara, N.Y., by 29 leaders. This was the forerunner of the N.A.A.C.P. It repudiated the Booker Washington



philosophy. Its platform demanded freedom of speech and criticism, unfettered and unsubsidized press, manhood suffrage, abolition of all caste distinctions based simply on race and color. The Niagara movement undertook legal work, defense, protest, etc.

In 1910 the Niagara movement merged with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The N.A.A.C.P. at its first conference raised five main demands:

1. Suffrage
2. No discrimination in public accommodations.
3. Freedom of social intercourse
4. Intervention of the national government to wipe out illiteracy in the South; equal educational opportunity; hostility to "any proposal to educate black boys and girls simply as servants and underlings, or simply for the use of other people."
5. Equality in enforcement of all laws.

### 7. Other Negro Organizations of the Period

1. The Urban League, founded in 1910, in connection with the migrations. It began as a sort of job-placement and aid bureau.
2. The National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, organized 1896.
3. The Negro Business League, founded in 1900 by Booker Washington.

### 8. The Great Migrations

Since the basic reasons for Negro migration have been so distorted, it is well to reconsider them. In this connection we may mention:

1. **Economic causes:** Among these may be included the North-South wage differential; the boll-weevil plague of 1915-16; peonage and its various consequences. The economic opportunity came with the development of northern industry; the opportunity was immensely increased with the beginning of the World War in 1914, which expanded munitions industries, created a labor shortage, and cut off immigration from Europe.

2. **Political and social causes:** lack of legal equality (in the courts); disfranchisement; lynching; segregation generally; lack of schooling facilities.

Because of the migrations, it has sometimes been said by chauvinists that the Negroes are of a migratory character, unsteady in their habits and unwilling to settle down. Actually, there has been less Negro than white migration, both relatively and absolutely. In 1910, about 16 percent of the Negroes were living in a state other than that of their birth; the number of whites who had so migrated was almost  $22\frac{1}{2}$  percent. The same historians who look upon the migration of the whites as evidence of their hardy, individualistic character, their pioneering, brave, and fearless spirit, can see in similar movements by the Negro only evidences of inferiority.

The early westward migration: The first of the larger migration movements began after Reconstruction. This was from the South to the West, chiefly to Kansas. It started in 1879. Leaders of this migration movement were Moses

(Pap) Singleton of Tennessee and Henry Adams of Louisiana. This migration is generally called the Pap Singleton movement.

The landlords tried to stop the movement by demanding of the steamship companies that they refuse to carry Negroes. Writs were sworn out against Negroes on false charges, simply to stop them from leaving.

The migration was chiefly to Kansas, although some reached other western states. About 65,000 or 70,000 migrated altogether.

The migration was opposed by some Negro leaders, notably Frederick Douglass who urged the Negroes to stay in the South where they had a chance of achieving some political power.

The greatest migration of all began in 1916. This was chiefly connected with the boll-weevil in the South, and the opportunity offered in the North by the expansion of war industries and the stoppage of European immigration. This migration was both cityward and northward. The Negroes swept into cities both North and South, although chiefly North. The growth of the Negro proletariat in comparison with the rest of the Negro population is shown by the following table.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percent Rural</u>	<u>Percent Urban (City)</u>
1890	80.6	19.4
1900	77.3	22.7
1910	72.6	27.4
1920	66.0	34.0

Between 1910 and 1920, the Negro population of the South increased two percent; the Negro population in the states north of the Mason-Dixon line increased 44 percent. Probably about 3/4 of a million Negroes migrated at this time.

Agents went south to recruit laborers for northern industry; the Negro newspapers and outstanding Negro leaders encouraged the migration. The southern landlords did their best to stop the movement. Carter Woodson, in A Century of Negro Migration, says:

"To frighten Negroes from the North, southern newspapers are (1918) carefully circulating reports that many of them are returning to their native land because of unexpected hardships. But having failed in this, southerners have compelled employment agents to cease operations there, arrested suspected employers, and, to prevent the departure of the Negroes, imprisoned on false charges those who appear at stations to leave for the North."

Sometimes the migrations were met with riots in northern cities, as in East St. Louis, Ill., in 1917, in which 6000 Negroes were driven from home and about 150 killed or seriously injured.

One of the outstanding results of the migration movement may be considered the creation of a Negro proletariat, the leading group in the Negro liberation movement.

## XII. THE WORLD WAR (1917-1918)

Preceding the discussion of the Negro's part in the World War should be a brief discussion of the war itself, its causes, etc.

Two important phases of the war will not be discussed here, as they were discussed in Section XI. However, they should be kept in mind. These are:

1. The great migration to the North and to the cities, which began in 1916 and continued through the war period.

2. Violence against the Negro people, and the struggle of the Negroes against this violence. Lynching, riots, etc., continued during the war. According to Tuskegee Institute, a total of 96 Negroes were lynched at home while America was at war (1917-18).

The Negroes entered the World War with the hope that participation in the armed forces, etc., would help bring an end to discrimination. A typical expression of this attitude was the "Close Ranks!" editorial in the Crisis, organ of the N.A.A.C.P., at the beginning of America's participation in the war.

However, all during this period, both in the armed forces and in America generally, shameless and open discrimination was everywhere practiced.

Efforts at discrimination took two forms. On the one hand, prominent southerners urged that Negroes be not admitted to the army at all. Early in 1917 it was said that the regular Negro regiments (9th and 10th Cavalry and 24th and 25th Infantry) were filled and there was no need of further Negro enlistment. On the other hand, there was the equally chauvinist tendency to force the Negroes already in the army to do more than their share of service and fighting, and to take on wherever possible the most disagreeable jobs and those carrying the least honor.

Draft Boards: The draft boards were composed in almost all instances exclusively of whites, and very often, especially in the South, practiced discrimination against the Negroes. Negro men with large families dependent on them for support were called for service and at the same time, whites who were single (usually, of course, those with pull or wealth) were exempted. Although the Negro people were one-tenth of the population, they furnished 13 percent of the soldiers.

Assignment to Service: There was considerable effort, to some degree successful, to keep the Negroes in menial work in the army, such as stevedore regiments and labor battalions. At Camp Lee, Virginia, for instance, hundreds of educated Negroes were assigned for stevedore work and other labor, the camp refusing to train them as infantrymen. By struggle of the Negroes and sympathetic whites, this was changed to a small degree.

Negro physicians, dentists, etc., were often forced to serve as privates and not in their professional capacity. At the same time, white doctors were assigned to Negro troops. Negro nurses were not sufficiently used, the excuse being given that separate quarters were not available for Negro and white nurses. Nearly 400,000 Negroes served in the army, of whom 200,000 went to France, and in spite of efforts to keep them at labor only, they served to some extent in every branch -- infantry, cavalry, artillery, signal corps, aviation, hospital and medical corps, ammunition trains, stevedore regiments, labor battalions, depot brigades, engineers, surveyors, etc.

Jim-Crow regiments: All regiments were Jim-Crow. There were no mixed regiments.

Commissions: There was a definite effort to prevent the commissioning of Negro officers, and to officer even the Negro troops with whites. Also, and this was a very sore point, there was a tendency to place white non-commissioned officers over Negro troops.

Through struggle, led especially by students, some Negroes were commissioned. The government and army refused to have Negroes trained with white officers. So the struggle took the form of a demand for a Negro officers' training camp. Fourteen white training camps had been established, but none for training Negro officers. At last such a camp was set up at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, from which 675 Negro officers were commissioned. All together 1200 Negroes were commissioned.

There was also an effort to prevent promotion. At the time the war began (1917) the highest-ranking Negro graduate of West Point was Colonel Charles E. Young. If he had been allowed to remain in the army, he would have had to be promoted over very many whites. He was therefore retired with the excuse of "high blood pressure." That this was only an excuse was shown by the fact that he was at once put back into active service with Negro troops, for which he would not have been fit if ill. However, the object was accomplished, as the army rule was that officers in retirement and then put back into service need not be promoted.

There were constant attempts to retire Negro officers in service, on grounds of "inefficiency."

In creating the 92nd Division (Negro), a list of offices was drawn up, to be held by whites only. These were the higher posts. Thus a deadline was set for the promotion of Negro officers.

Even when Negro and white officers had to be together for some reason, ways were found to segregate them, as at mess, etc.

Jim-Crowism in U.S. camps; attacks on Negro troops in the U.S.: The officials of many southern states protested against Negro troops being in the South for training. For this reason many Negroes were sent to northern camps, even when they were native to the South. Unused to the climate, they died like flies from pneumonia and influenza in the very hard winter of 1917-18. The situation was made worse by discrimination against the Negro troops in clothing, blankets, housing, and medical care.

While in camp, Negroes were denied the possibility of using theaters, etc. Negroes fought boldly against this Jim-Crowism. After soldiers of the 92nd, at Camp Funston, Kansas, had refused to recognize the Jim-Crow line in theaters, the commanding officer issued Bulletin No. 35, repeating the Jim-Crow orders and instructing soldiers and officers to refrain from using privileges of the city accorded to whites. The Bulletin said: "...Don't go where your presence is not desired....White men made the Division and they can break it just as easily if it becomes a trouble-maker." The order aroused the Negro people to call mass meetings to demand the removal of the officer who issued it.

Other complaints of the soldiers in camp in America were that white officers called them "nigger," "darky," "coon," etc., and physically assaulted

them, drove them, kept them more closely confined to camp than white troops, denied them passes, meted out severe punishments for small offenses or no offenses at all, permitted the Military Police to pick on them. There was also inferior medical care, food, clothing, and shelter in the Negro camps.

There were many physical assaults on Negro soldiers by the white population in the South. Negroes in uniform were mobbed on the streets. Thus the 8th Illinois, on the way to Texas, was jeered and stoned. At Spartanburg, S.C., Negro and white soldiers from New York were in training. The city officials wanted them to "know their place." When a Negro soldier, Noble Sissle, went into a hotel to buy a newspaper, the hotel proprietor assaulted him. White and Negro New York soldiers then rushed the hotel, and started out to shoot up the town. They were stopped only by the interference of their officers.

The worst of the assaults on Negro troops, which resulted in the hanging of 13 of them because they defended themselves, was the affair at Houston, Texas, in August, 1917. It involved the 24th Infantry, some of whose members are still in jail because of this affair more than twenty years ago. The Crisis, organ of the N.A.A.C.P., made an investigation on the spot, and published a report, from which the following excerpts are taken:

"The primary cause of the Houston riot was the habitual brutality of the white police officers of Houston in their treatment of colored people.

"The presence of the Negro troops inevitably stirred its Negro-phobe elements to protest. There was some feeling against the troops being there at all. It was almost universally conceded that the members of the white police forces habitually cursed, struck, and otherwise maltreated colored prisoners.

"In deference to the southern feeling against arming of Negroes, members of the provost guard were not armed, thus creating a situation without precedent in the history of this guard. A few carried clubs, but none of them had guns and most of them were without weapons of any kind. They were supposed to call on the white officers to make arrests. The feeling is strong among the colored people of Houston that this was the real cause of the riot.

"Several minor encounters took place between the military and civil police shortly after the troops arrived.

"On the afternoon of August 23, two policemen, Lee Sparks and Rufe Daniels, the former known to the colored people as a brutal bully, entered the house of a respectable colored woman in an alleged search for a colored fugitive accused of crap-shooting. Failing to find him, they arrested the woman, striking and cursing her and forcing her out into the street only partly clad. While they were waiting for a patrol wagon, a crowd gathered about the weeping woman. In this crowd was a colored officer, Private Edwards. Edwards seems to have questioned the police officers or remonstrated with them. The officers immediately set upon him and beat him to the ground with the butts of their six-shooters, continuing to beat and kick him while he was on the ground, and arrested him. In the words of Sparks himself; 'I beat that nigger until his heart got right. He was a good nigger when I got through with him.' Later Corporal Baltimore, a member of the

military police, approached the officers and inquired for Edwards, as it was his duty to do. Sparks immediately opened fire, and Baltimore, being unarmed, fled. They followed, beat him up, and arrested him. It was this outrage which infuriated the men of the 24th Infantry to the point of revolt.

"When word of the outrage reached the camp, feeling was high. It was by no means the first incident of the kind that had occurred.

"Strange stories began to be circulated in the papers, and by word of mouth, as to the real cause of the friction between the soldiers and the police. It was again the insolence of the Negro soldiers which in this case took the form of ignoring Jim-Crow regulations of Houston, particularly on the Houston street cars.

"When the soldiers left the camp, their slogan was 'On to the police station,' where their idea was to punish the police for their attack on Edwards and Baltimore. Even the white people of Houston do not believe that their original intention was to shoot up the town. When on the way to the police station, they met with opposition, they gave battle with terrible results (18 killed)."

For this, 63 members of the 24th were court-martialed, 13 were hanged (not even being granted the usual military death by shooting), 41 were sentenced to prison for life, four were sentenced for short terms, and five were acquitted.

Houston was, however, hailed as a sign that the Negro people, especially the soldiers, were fighting back against violence, terror, discrimination, and insult.

Jim-Crowism in France; slander against Negro troops in France: Although Negroes were a small percentage of the troops in the A.E.F. (American Expeditionary Forces, in France), they furnished 75 percent of the A.E.F.'s labor supply. They were used constantly in such jobs as road-building, stevedore, loading and unloading ships and cars, building depots, burying and re-burying the dead, and detonating scattered explosives.

There was a constant campaign of slander against the Negro troops in France, which was intensified because Jim-Crowism was not practiced in that country by the native population. Thus, Colonel Allan J. Greer of the 92nd Division wrote from France to Senator K.D. McKellar urging elimination of all Negro combat troops and officers. The letter characterized the Negroes as sneaks, cowards, and liars. This in spite of the fact that there were Negro troops regularly decorated for bravery and that the 8th Illinois (part of the 92nd Division), officered by Negroes, received more citations and Croix de Guerres than any other regiment in France.

Order No. 40, issued in France, instructed Negroes not to talk to or with French women, and the Military Police, following this order, arrested many Negroes.

One of the most shameful occurrences was the issuance of a document urging Jim-Crowism on French officers. Carter Woodson sums this up as follows:

"To extend systematically the operation of race prejudice throughout France, the Americans had issued, August 7, 1918, through a French

mission from General Pershing's headquarters, certain Secret Information Concerning Black American Troops. The Americans proclaimed that it was important for French officers in command of black Americans to have an idea as to the status of the race in the United States. The Negroes were branded as a menace of degeneracy which could be escaped only by an impassable gulf established between the two races. This was an urgent need then because of the tendency of the blacks to commit the loathsome crime of assault, as they said Negroes had already been doing in France. The French were therefore cautioned not to treat the Negroes with familiarity and indulgence, which are matters of grievous concern to Americans and an affront to their national policy. The Americans, it continued, were afraid that the blacks might thereby be inspired with undesirable aspirations. It was carefully explained that although the black man is a citizen of the United States, he is regarded by whites as an inferior with whom relations of business and service only are possible; and that the black is noted for his want of intelligence, lack of discretion, and lack of civic and professional conscience. The French army was then advised to prevent intimacy between French officers and black officers, not to eat with them nor shake hands nor seek to talk or meet with them outside of the requirements of military service. They were asked also not to commend too highly the black American troops in the presence of white Americans. Although it was all right to recognize the good qualities and services of black Americans, it should be done in moderate terms strictly in keeping with the truth. The French were urged also to restrain the native cantonment population from spoiling the Negroes, as white Americans become greatly incensed at any deep expression of intimacy between white women and black men."

