NEGROES IN AMERICAN HISTORY:

A FREEDOM PRIMER

Negroes in American History

A Freedom Primer

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Introduction

This is a history book about us. It is about a history that has been denied us by lies about what we are and what we have been. It is a book with pictures that can be colored with crayons. But most of all, this is a book to be used. This is a book we helped make and can continue to help make (and not just with crayons). What all of this means is that this is really a history book about us today, as well as about us yesterday.

What we learn from this book about us is that there is a lot about us that we don't know. Which raises the question why we don't know. That big question why is a threat and a challenge to the people who have kept us from knowing us. Which makes this a very dangerous book to those who don't want us to know about us. Probably it won't be used in any schools, except for the schools we make.

You see, to ask questions really means to try and find truth, which really means to ask more questions. To ask more questions means to make more challenges, which really means to do things **you** think are important to you. That's dangerous

too, and usually isn't allowed by the same people who keep us from knowing about us.

As you read, ask why haven't I learned about Cherokee Bill, Nat Turner, Peter Salem, Sojourner Truth and the many others of us in this book. Think about how you should know about many of us in this book who fought against being slaves, and fought for freedom in this country, and weren't "happy and satisfied." Think about freedom. Freedom is fought for by the people who question and challenge slavery. Ask, as you read, am I free? If I am not free, who do I question and challenge? How do I question and challenge?

All of this is to say think about making a book of your own, about you today. Call it maybe a freedom fighting history book. But before doing that, make a freedom fight.

—charlie cobb

A Note About the Revisions

When we wrote the first edition of the Freedom Primer, we wrote it for the kinds of kids we had met and talked to while working in a Freedom School in Marshall County, Mississippi. We didn't know then that the book would be used outside the freedom schools of the South. So the language and the kinds of ideas and people we put into the book were included with that idea in mind.

Since that time, some criticisms have come in about the book. Some people didn't understand who we had written the book for and felt that it should have been longer, included more people and other aspects of the Negro struggle.

Neither the first nor second edition were written as definitive works on Negro history. They were written simply so that young people like yourselves who did not know about men like Du Bois and Denmark Vesey and all the others could learn a little about them. There are many people and events important to Negro history which could not be included here because we didn't have enough

room. So, when you read this, we want you to understand that there are many more black people like those you'll read about in this book. And if you want to find out about them, you can look through some of the books we talked about earlier or you can ask around for the names of some more books.

These primers are now being used by folks like yourselves in Harlem, Chicago, Philadelphia, Watts, and many more communities around the country.

We've gone into a second edition so that we'd have enough books for all those who wanted them. And we thought while we were at it, we would make the book better by using some of the suggestions other people have given us. We've added more drawings and some questions we felt you could try to answer about your history and about yourselves. We hope you like the new things we've added.

-f.c. & b.c.

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Negroes in the American Revolution

AT ONE TIME, the king of England owned America. He made laws that people in America had to obey. When a country is owned by another country, it is called a colony. New England was part of the colony of America. The people in New England used to have mass meetings. They called the meetings Town Meetings.

At these meetings they spoke against the way England made decisions for them. They didn't want to pay taxes to England when they didn't get to help decide what the laws should be. They didn't want British soldiers to live in their towns and order them around. They didn't want England to control how much money they could earn when they sold what they made. Like Negroes in the South today, they had no voice in the government.

But many people who came to the mass meetings were Toms for the English. So when someone spoke up, he often got in trouble. After a while, people started thinking they should be free from England. They decided that they would fight Britain if that was what they had to do to be free. They were tired of being almost like slaves to England.

The movement is sometimes called a "Negro Revolution." What is a revolution? Was the American Revolution like the freedom movement today?

So they wrote the Declaration of Independence. It said that all men were equal and that men should not be controlled by other men. Many of the people who signed the declaration also owned slaves. Some of them felt that Negroes should be free. But many of them thought that freedom was for whites only.

IN THE DAYS before the war, Boston was one of the towns where British soldiers stayed. The soldiers' coats were red so the people called them "redcoats." The people and the soldiers hated each other and they would often have small fights.

One day there was a bad fist fight between some soldiers and town people. When everybody heard about it the next day, they were very angry. Many of them went out into the streets to wait for something to happen. One little boy got hit over the head by an angry soldier. The people picked up rocks and sticks and marched up to where the soldiers stayed.

The leader of the people that day was a tall, strong Negro named Crispus Attucks. He was a runaway slave who had become a sailor. He stood in front of the people and told them the soldiers would not dare to shoot. The people shouted at the redcoats, "Shoot and be damned! Shoot and be damned!"

A soldier shot into the air to scare the people away. They didn't have tear gas and cattle prods in those days. Instead of running away, the people threw rocks at the soldiers. The angry soldiers started shooting at the people. Crispus Attucks fell to the ground, killed by a soldier's bullet. Then the people attacked the soldiers with stones and sticks. They were too mad to care about bullets.

Finally the soldiers backed away and the fighting stopped. Four Americans lay dead in the

street. The people carried them away and they were all given a hero's funeral. Crispus Attucks, a black man, was the first person to die for American freedom.

A FEW YEARS after Attucks was killed, the war for freedom really began. Most Negroes were slaves then but some were free. At first the American army would not use Negroes as soldiers, not even free Negroes. But Negroes fought anyway, right from the start.

After a while, the British army started promising freedom to any slaves who would fight on their side. Thousands of slaves ran away and joined the English army to fight for their freedom against their masters. After that the American army let Negroes join too.

Negroes fought for American freedom in all the biggest battles. Often it was their fighting which made the difference between winning and losing. A Negro, Peter Salem, was a hero in the battle of Bunker Hill. Another, Salem Poor, was spoken of by 14 army officers. They said he acted like an officer and was a very brave soldier. Some Negroes also worked as spies for the army.

Many slaves died fighting in the war and many ran away and found freedom. But many were still slaves. Lots of people did not think it was right that people who fought in the war for freedom were still slaves. So the first big emancipation of slaves in the United States came after the war. Many black men were set free as a reward for fighting in the war. Some slave owners thought about the words of the Declaration of Independence. They freed their slaves even if they didn't fight in the war.

There was a movement in the North called the Rights of Man movement. This movement felt it was wrong for any man to keep another man in

Does the government sometimes say one thing and mean another?

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "The nation cannot expect colored people to feel that the United States is worth defending if the Negro continues to be treated as he is now." Do you agree with this?

slavery. Through laws and in the courts, legal slavery was ended in the North.

It looked like slavery would die in the South too. But then the cotton gin was invented. The gin meant that people could clean cotton much faster than before and make more money selling it. People in the South decided to keep their slaves and grow cotton. To them, making money was more important than freedom and equality for all men.

Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution

THE COUNTRY OF Haiti is part of an island in the Gulf of Mexico. A few French planters and about 500,000 Negro slaves lived there in 1790. Just as in the South, the slaves worked in the fields. They raised sugar and other crops. The planters made lots of money from these crops. The slaves came from Africa just like the slaves in America did. Many of the same slave ships carried slaves to both places.

A revolution was going on in France. It was a war between rich people and poor people. The cry of the poor people was "Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood!" Slaves heard the French planters talking about the revolution. They started thinking about the words . . . liberty . . . equality . . . Drums began to beat in the hills.

The French planters thought the Negroes were having religious ceremonies. But the black men were planning their own revolution. In 1791, a group of slaves from many different plantations met in the hills. The time was set. On August 22, all over the French colony, plantations were in flames and white people were killed. One hundred thousand slaves had revolted.

Could what happened in Haiti happen in the South?

ON ONE PLANTATION there was a slave who was a carriage driver. He was about 50 years old. His name was Toussaint L'Ouverture. He had listened to the white people enough to know that the revolt would need order and training to win. He knew there were enemies who would try to end the revolt if the joyful slaves were not well organized. Toussaint became the organizer.

The British and French and Spanish all hoped to end the revolt and take over Haiti. Toussaint set them fighting against each other until they were all weak. Then Toussaint forced them all to withdraw from the island. He claimed leadership of the whole island. He started to make it into a good country for everyone who lived there. He built roads and forts and schools and hospitals. He set up courts of law, a system of taxes and an army. He made peace with the white people who were still on the island and with the free mulattoes who had been afraid of him. Soon he was a hero to them as well as to the black people.

Haiti remained a part of the French empire in name even though it was run by black people. But Napoleon, the French ruler, had plans for Haiti. And his plans needed slaves. Toussaint was in his way. So, Napoleon sent General Le Clerc with 25,000 soldiers to win back the island. Toussaint's army was weak so he withdrew to the mountains. His soldiers burned crops and destroyed roads to leave nothing the French could use. Toussaint waited.

Then one of his generals became a Tom for the French. Toussaint was afraid the French knew all his plans. So he asked for a temporary peace. He hoped he could go on waiting and soon the fever would kill many of the French troops. But before that happened, the French tricked Tous-

saint and captured him. He was sent to France and kept in prison. He died there in 1803.

Dessalines, one of Toussaint's helpers, took over the leadership of Haiti. He finally drove out the French. Haiti became free from France just like America had become free from England.

The black people of Haiti remember Toussaint, the "first of the blacks", as the hero of their revolution. And many slaves in America heard of Toussaint and remembered him too. Toussaint proved that slaves could revolt and win.

What is it like in Haiti today?

Slave Revolts

SOME HISTORY BOOKS try to make us believe that slaves were content to be slaves. Actually, ever since there first was slavery in the United States, there were also slaves trying to be free. All through the days of slavery, the white people feared that the slaves might revolt and fight back at the people who mistreated them. White people wrote the books that said Negroes were happy. That was what the white people wanted to believe.

But slaves were not happy. They knew that trying to revolt was almost hopeless. They had no weapons to fight with. White people had guns and whips. Even so, during slavery there were about 250 slave revolts in the United States. The revolt of the slaves in Haiti gave hope to many slaves who wished to be free. And it made the white people in the South even more afraid.

In 1800, Gabriel Prosser, a slave, wanted to revolt. His plan was to gather followers and attack the nearby town of Richmond, Virginia. They would kill all the white people in the town. Then they would use the town for a fort and attack other towns. One very stormy night Gabriel and

What did the slave revolts accomplish? What is a rent strike? How is a rent strike like a slave revolt?

several thousand followers started for Richmond. The rain had washed out the bridge so they could not use the road. They planned to wait a few days. But one slave told his master of the plan and the people in Richmond were warned.

When the slaves started out again, they were attacked and caught. Gabriel was hanged. Many of the white people said that Gabriel probably would have captured the town if the storm hadn't stopped him. They said the town was poorly defended and the slaves outnumbered the townspeople.

DENMARK VESEY HAD been born a slave. He bought his freedom and became a carpenter in Charleston, South Carolina. Denmark loved freedom and hated to see anyone be a slave. He asked all the slaves he met, "Don't you want to be free?" He would tell them about the revolt in Haiti where all the slaves were now free. He spent many years agitating among the slaves. They all looked to him for a leader. Then he started to organize a revolt.

There were about 9,000 people in Denmark's slave army. He organized them very carefully. The people he worried about most were the slaves who worked in white people's houses. They often got to work in the houses because they were Uncle Toms and would tell their masters what the other slaves were doing. Denmark was afraid that the house slaves would tell about the revolt.

Just two days before the revolt was to happen, one house slave did tell. Denmark tried to revolt anyway, but the white people knew too much. They caught Denmark and all the leaders and hanged them. The white people were very scared when they found out how carefully Denmark had planned the revolt. They killed many Negroes to make sure none of the leaders were

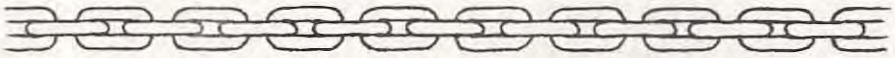
still alive.

THE MOST FAMOUS slave revolt of all was Nat Turner's. Nat was a very religious man. He felt that God had some great job for him to do. One day Nat thought he saw a sign from God. He decided that God wanted him to revolt. The county seat of Southampton County, Virginia, was called Jerusalem. Nat decided that he should march to Jerusalem and kill all the white people.

At midnight one night in 1831, Nat and seven other slaves started out. They had a hatchet and a broad axe. First they marched to Nat's master's house. Everyone was asleep. They went inside and killed the whole family. They took guns and powder and set the house on fire. They went on all night, burning houses and killing white people. As they went, other slaves joined them until there were 70 in the band. Finally they rested, about three miles from Jerusalem. Someone warned the people in town. They came out and attacked Nat's band.

Nat and his men had to run away. They never got back together. They were hunted down and killed. Nat hid in the swamps and wasn't found for about two months. The white people killed many Negroes because they were so scared. They even killed some slaves who had nothing to do with the revolt. Even after Nat was caught and killed, the white people were still afraid. Many of them moved away and none of them ever forgot Nat Turner and his revolt.

Was the Watts incident like a slave revolt? Should the people of Watts want to revolt?



Negroes and Indians

IN THE EARLY days of the United States, settlers sometimes used Indians for slaves. They did not make very good slaves because they would often die when they were kept in slavery. Also, they knew the country better than the white people. They could easily hide when they ran away so that the white people could never find them.

White people very soon found that Negroes made much better slaves. They could be used for years and years. They could be treated very badly before the hard work would kill them. It was a strange land for the black folk. Even when they did run away they were usually caught.

Some whites did keep Indians for slaves as well as Negroes. And even when they weren't slaves, Indians often lived near the white people. Whites usually treated Indians in the same way they treated Negroes. So, Negroes and Indians were usually friendly with each other. Some Indians were afraid of the blacks. They called them "devil-gods". But often their hatred of white people made Indians and Negroes friends. Many of them intermarried so that Negro slaves had free Indian husbands and wives. Sometimes they inter-

Should the government pay the Indians for the land they took?

married so much that whole Indian tribes became part of the Negro race.

When slaves ran away from their masters, they would often go to live with the Indians. Negroes joined just about every Indian tribe in the whole United States, even the ones in the far West. Usually runaway slaves lived with the nearby tribes in the South. Most often they joined the Seminoles.

Some of the Indians kept runaways as slaves for themselves. But most of the time the Negroes would live with the Indians. Sometimes they lived in separate villages just like the Indian villages. The blacks would become members of the tribes. They would be warriors and sometimes even chiefs. They helped the Indians by telling them about the white people. When Indians had to talk with whites, Negroes would often do the talking for them. Negroes knew more about the white people and could talk with them better.

THERE WERE MANY wars between whites and Indians. Negroes would sometimes help the Indians in these wars. When the Indians won one of these wars, they would kill all the white people they captured. They almost never killed the Negro slaves. Sometimes white people would fight wars with Indians just to get back runaway slaves.

Once, about a thousand slaves took over a fort in West Florida. It had belonged to the British. They abandoned it after the War of 1812. The United States government decided that too many Indian raids were coming from West Florida—which was not a part of the United States then. So, in 1816, the government sent Andrew Jackson with an army to attack the fort. He attacked and captured it. He sent all the slaves who weren't killed back into slavery. Many Indians

were killed too. That started the first Seminole war.

The war ended in 1818. In 1835, a runaway slave girl who had married a Seminole warrior was caught and sent back to slavery. Her angry husband led the Seminoles in an attack which started the second Seminole war. During this war at least 500 Negroes were caught and sent back into slavery. Many more Indians were killed. The reason the government gave for the wars was Indian attacks. But the real reason for both wars was to get back some of the slaves who had run away.

The Seminoles and the Negroes stuck together. In 1839, when the Indians and the government made peace, the Seminoles were sent to live in Oklahoma. And the black Indians went with the red ones.

What about Indians and other minority groups today? Do Negroes and minority groups work together? Should they? What can happen when they do? What are reservations like today?

Women in the Movement

FREEDOM! That was the dream of every slave. Not just men, but women too. They dreamed of a day when they would be free. Harriet Tubman was such a woman. Born a slave in Maryland, Harriet escaped to the North when she was 25. But freedom for just herself was not enough and soon Harriet was heading South again.

She knew she would be a slave again if she were caught but Harriet went back to her old home. She led out her brothers and her old mother and father. The way was long and hard. They had to travel at night so they wouldn't be seen. They had to swim across rivers and much of the way they had to walk. Harriet brought them all to freedom. But even that was not enough. There were still too many of her people in slavery. Harriet returned to the South 19 times and led out over 300 slaves.

All the slave owners hated her. They said they would pay as much as $40,000 to anyone who caught her. But Harriet was careful and never got caught. She always seemed to know when there was trouble ahead and what to do about it.

Is there a freedom underground railroad today?

Even in the middle of the night she seemed to know which way to turn.

Sometimes she had to be hard with the people she was leading. Not everyone was as strong and brave as Harriet Tubman. If there was a baby in the group, Harriet would feed it dope. Then it would stay asleep and not cry. She always carried a gun with her. One time a man was very tired. He said he couldn't go any farther. Harriet pointed the gun at him and said, "Dead folks tell no tales. You go on or die." So the man went on to freedom.

Sometimes Harriet led the people all the way to Canada. There were laws in the United States that said runaway slaves had to be sent back to their masters. Harriet was a famous part of what was called the "underground railroad". The underground railroad didn't have trains or tracks. It wasn't a real railroad at all. It was the name given to all the people who helped slaves escape.

There were people, both black and white, all along the way to the North who would hide slaves in their barns and cellars. They would feed them and give them clothes. These people hated slavery just as much as Harriet did. They helped runaway slaves even though it was against the law. When Harriet talked about the underground railroad she would say, "I never run my train off the track and I never lost a passenger." And out of all her trips, she never did lose anyone.

With the Civil War, it looked like slavery would soon come to an end. But Harriet did not feel her job was done or that the war was for men only. She served as a nurse on the battlefield and as a spy for the Union army.

THERE WAS A slave named Isabella who grew up in New York. She became free when New

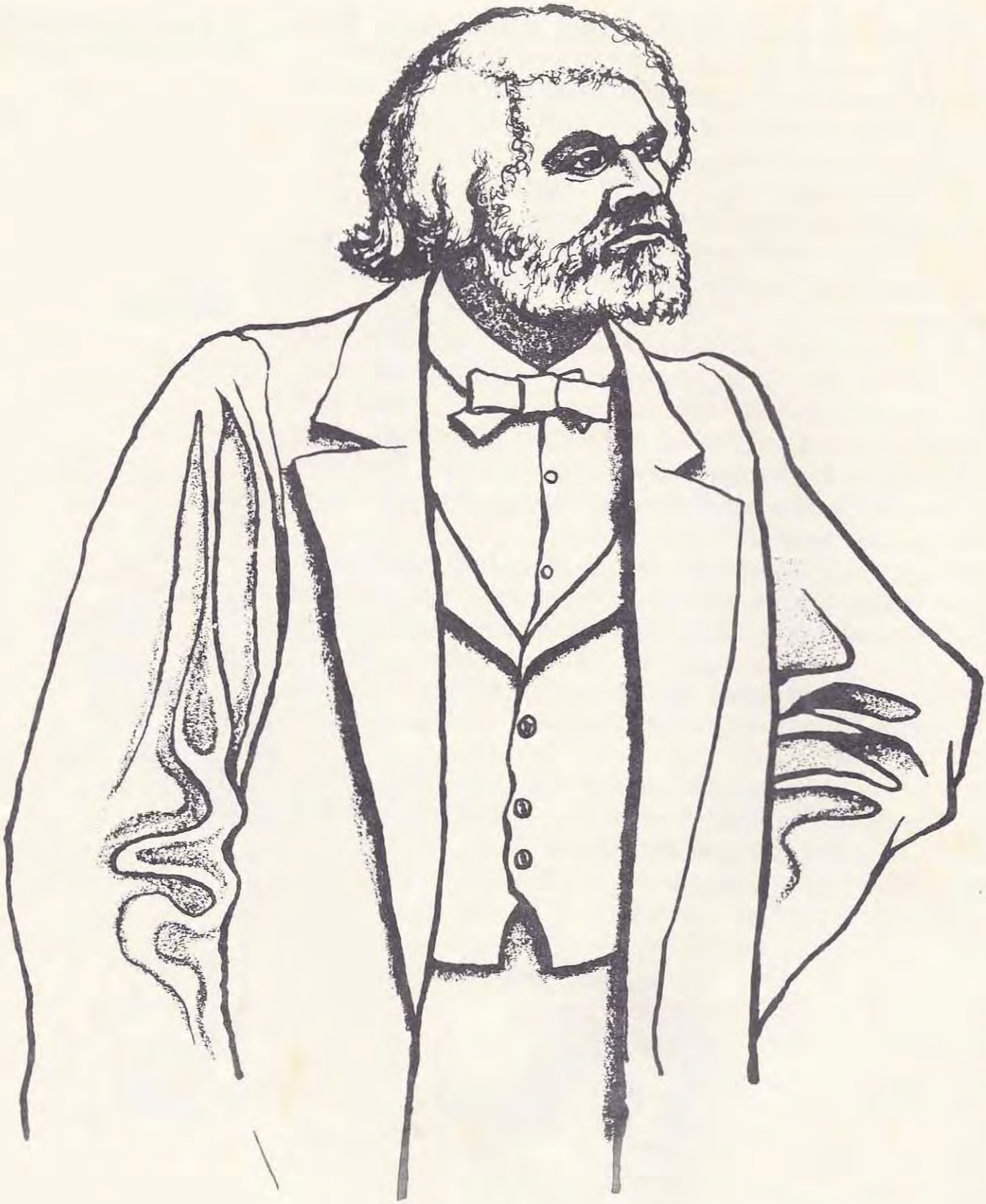
York law freed all the slaves in that state. She was a very religious woman and she believed in freedom. One day she walked out of New York City carrying a bag of clothes and 25 cents. She started to preach freedom all over the country. She changed her name to Sojourner Truth. Sojourner means someone who stays for only a little while and then goes on. Sojourner travelled, stopping here and then there, and always talking about freedom.

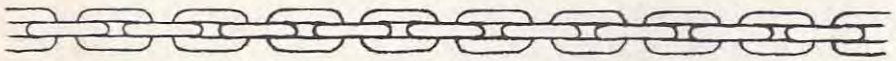
What role do women play in the Movement today?

She would tell the story of going out to look at a wheat field. She saw the wheat standing there so big and tall. She took ahold of the wheat and there was no wheat there. So she asked God, "What is the matter with this wheat?" And God said, "Sojourner, there is a little weasel in it." (She meant weevil.)

And then she would talk about the Constitution and the rights of man. She said, "I come up and I takes hold of this Constitution and I feels for my rights but there ain't any there. Then I says, 'God, what ails this Constitution?' And He says to me, 'Sojourner, there is a little weasel it it.'"

Sojourner was a famous abolitionist talker. Few of the many people who listened to this tall, dark woman ever forgot her.





Frederick Douglass and the Abolitionists

ALL DURING SLAVERY there were people who fought against slavery. They were mostly in the North. They were called Abolitionists. Some, like Harriet Tubman, helped slaves escape. Others, like Sojourner Truth, talked about the evils of slavery. But not all abolitionists were Negroes. Many were white people. For a long time the Negroes who worked with the abolitionists didn't have much of a voice in the movement. After a while, Negroes really began to fight for themselves.

ONE OF THE most famous of Negro abolitionists was Frederick Douglass. He was born a slave in Maryland in 1817. When he was a child, he taught himself to read. Slaves did not have schools. The white people knew that learning to read and write would make the slaves want to know more. And knowledge would make them want to be free. That was just what happened to Frederick Douglass. In 1838, he ran away to New York where he could be free.

The tall, handsome Douglass soon became an abolitionist speaker. The people never heard anything like him before. Most speakers were

Do you agree with Garrison that not voting is a good way to protest against things the government does?

white men or free Negroes. Douglass had been a slave. He could tell people first hand what it was like. He was also a very good speaker. He could make the people really feel as if they were in the slave huts of a plantation.

It is the same way today with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The people in the FDP believe that only poor people know what it is like to be poor. So they don't send lawyers and preachers to tell people in the North what it is like to be poor in the South. They send poor people.

Douglass soon was a famous abolitionist. He worked with William Garrison. Garrison was a famous white abolitionist in Massachusetts. Garrison believed in nonviolence. He believed that people's consciences would make them give up slavery if you showed them how evil it was. He did not believe in direct action or any kind of violence.

Douglass agreed with Garrison and preached the same message. They also believed that the Constitution was in favor of slavery, which meant the government was in favor of slavery too. They said the government should not be supported. Not even by voting.

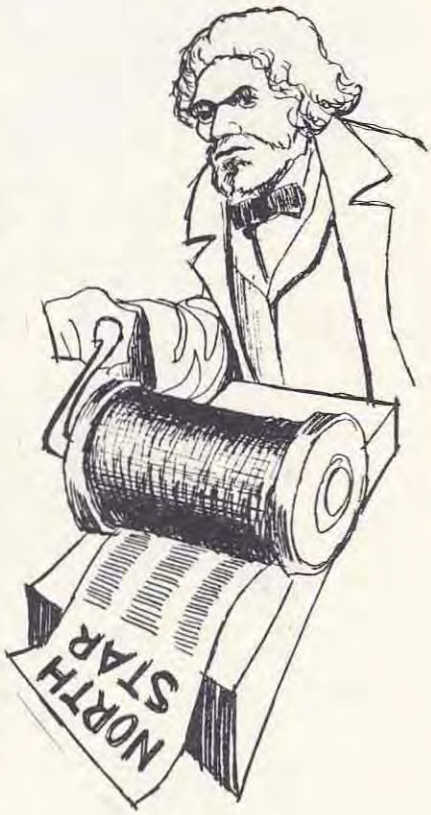
Douglass visited England and was warmly welcomed. The English were shocked by slavery in America. They were always very kind to the abolitionists who visited them. While he was in England, some of Douglass' friends gathered together money and bought his freedom. After that he could not be caught as a runaway slave when he came back to America.

AFTER HE RETURNED to America, Douglass met John Brown, the militant white abolitionist. Brown believed in direct action. He said conscience would not change the slaveowners. He said that as long as slaves made money for their

owners, the owners would not give up slavery. Brown planned to organize an army in the Virginia mountains. He planned to raid plantations from it. He would carry off all the slaves to the mountains. There they could hide. Or they could go north to freedom. Slaves cost a lot of money to buy. Brown hoped he could carry off enough slaves to make the slaveowners lose lots of money. Then they might decide to give up slavery. Douglass did not like Brown's plan at first because he believed in nonviolence. But he was losing faith in changing men's hearts. He began to agree with Brown and to believe in more direct action.

Was Douglass like a freedom worker today? Was he different?

In 1859, Brown rented a farm in West Virginia. He planned to capture the government weapons which were stored at Harper's Ferry nearby. Then he planned to use the farm as a base for raids. Douglass didn't approve of this part of the plan when he heard about it. He didn't think Brown could succeed in an attack against federal property. Brown's plot did fail and he was captured and hanged. But John Brown's militant spirit has never been forgotten.



Douglass broke with Garrison to work on his own. He started a newspaper called the **North Star.** (He chose the name because slaves followed the north star when they were escaping north to freedom.) Douglass studied the Constitution some more and finally decided that it might be used against slavery. He felt abolitionists should work to get it enforced as an anti-slavery document. Douglass and his followers tried many kinds of action. They even had sit-ins on trains in Massachusetts. One time Douglass took a part of a seat with him when he was removed from a white-only section.

ABOLITIONISTS DIDN'T WIN much in those days. There were many people in the North as well as the South who believed in slavery. Free

Could President Lincoln have done more to end slavery? Could President Lyndon Johnson do more to end oppression today?

black people in the North were faced with a great deal of discrimination. Often abolitionist meetings were broken up by angry crowds. Sometimes the speakers were beaten and chased just like freedom workers today.

As war seemed more and more likely, abolitionists worried about what position the government would take on slavery. Many, like Douglass, believed that a civil war would mean freedom for the slaves. When the Civil War broke out, Douglass cried, "God be praised!"

President Lincoln did not like slavery but he had not said what he thought the government should do about it. Some of the states that had slavery were still with the Union. They were called border states. Lincoln was afraid they would join the Confederates if he said he was against slavery. Douglass and the abolitionists worked hard to educate the country and Lincoln. They tried to show that the war had to end slavery. Douglass even personally visited Lincoln to put pressure on him. Lincoln wanted to go slow. At one time he even suggested that the border states should end slavery by 1900!

But the Union needed Negroes to fight. It was this need, more than belief in the rights of man, that ended slavery. Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Emancipation on New Year's Day in 1863. Whatever the reason, the abolitionists were joyful. They had finally won freedom.

During the rest of the war, Douglass was busy getting Negroes to join the army. Until his death in 1895, Frederick Douglass remained a fighter for Negro rights.

He also worked for other causes, such as women's rights and world peace. Douglass was truly a freedom fighter.

US

Negroes in the Civil War

THE CIVIL WAR was caused by the different needs of the North and the South. Laws that were good for agriculture in the South were bad for industry in the North. And laws that helped industry hurt agriculture.

The South felt that the North was picking on it. The North thought the South was being old fashioned and holding up progress. This went on until finally the two started fighting. But only a few people in the South owned most of the best land and most of the slaves. And only a few people owned the industry in the North. These people didn't even have to fight in the war.

In the South, anyone who owned more than 15 slaves did not have to be a soldier. In the North, anyone who paid the government $300 did not have to go to war. That was a lot of money in those days and only the rich could afford it. As in most wars, it was the working people on both sides who did the fighting. People said it was a "rich man's war but a poor man's fight".

The North said it was fighting to save the Union, not to free the slaves. President Lincoln said that he would keep slavery if it would hold

How are Negroes treated in the Army today?

the country together. At first, many Union officers actually returned runaway slaves to their masters. This helped the very people they were fighting. So in the beginning of the war, many slaves were confused about what the war meant for them. They waited and watched to see what would happen.

Finally the Northern army decided to stop helping the enemy by returning slaves. Negroes flocked to the Union lines by the thousands. Over 500,000 slaves ran away from their masters to follow the Union army. It was the biggest general strike in the nation's history.

After two years of fighting, Lincoln decided that he could not win the war without the help of Negroes. He gave the order that Negroes could join the army. By the end of the war, almost 200,000 black men had answered the call to arms. And 38,000 of them died in battle.

WHEN NEGROES FIRST joined the army, many Union officers didn't think they would make good soldiers. But they soon proved that they could fight. In fact, they fought even harder than white soldiers. They knew the evil of the enemy's slavery better than anyone else. One Union colonel said that black soldiers won battles that the bravest white troops would have lost.

In one battle near Richmond, 12 Negroes won Congressional Medals of Honor. In another battle at Milliken's Bend, Louisiana, 2,000 Texans attacked 1,000 Negroes. The Negro troops ran out of bullets and fought the Confederates with their bayonets and with their hands. They used their empty guns as clubs. The Texans were not used to this kind of battle and ran off in defeat.

Another reason Negroes fought so hard was because they knew they would suffer hard treatment if they were captured. Many Confed-

erates hated Negroes. Instead of treating them as prisoners of war, they would murder any Negroes they caught.

One of the worst crimes of the war was the Fort Pillow Massacre. The Confederates captured the fort and killed every Negro after the battle. They killed them with bayonets and with clubs. They burned them alive and buried them alive. They nailed them to houses and tortured them to death. Three hundred Negroes were murdered this way. The Confederate general who led the murderers was Nathan Bedford Forrest. Forrest was a slave trader before the war. He became the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan after the war.

How is the North like the South today? Who is in control?

WHEN THE WAR ended in 1865, Negroes looked to the future with hope in their hearts. They didn't know that one hundred years later, equality would still be an empty promise.

Negro Cowboys

MOST PEOPLE TODAY don't know that Negroes played an important part in taming the American West. But they did. As early as 1539, a Negro explorer named Estevánico discovered the Pueblos of New Mexico. In the middle of the 1700's, Negro families were among the founders of Los Angeles. Before the Civil War, many Negroes were brought to Texas as slaves. After the war, many more went west to find a new life.

The big business of the West was raising cattle. The big problem of the West was to get the cattle to the people in the east who would buy them. That meant very hard work driving the big herds on the trails from Texas to the railroads in the north. The trip took two or three months. Over 5,000 Negro cowboys helped to do that work.

Besides being cowboys, many Negroes were cooks for the trail crews. The cook was often a cowboy who was too old for the hard work of riding with the herds. He was in charge of setting up camp and feeding the cowboys. He also kept up their spirits by listening to their troubles and entertaining them. Sometimes he played a banjo or a fiddle

Do people always get along better when they're not competing for jobs? Why?

When the first jail was built in Abilene, a Negro cook was the first prisoner. He was also the first to escape when the cowboys he cooked for found out where he was. They chased the marshall away and shot the lock off the jail. The cowboys always tried hard to keep their cooks happy.

Negro cowboys met with some discrimination. But there was less than in other parts of the country. In the east, poor white workers were afraid that Negroes would get their jobs so they hated Negroes. In the West, there were more jobs than workers. If men could work hard, that was more important than their race. Even so, very few Negroes ever got the top jobs.

There was more justice for Negroes in the West than in the South. If a white man murdered a Negro, he might hang for it if he were caught. And a Negro's testimony in court could put a white man at the end of a rope. But many of the whites who went west were unreconstructed confederates. So there were examples of people being murdered for no reason other than the color of their skin, just like in the South.

Thousands of Negroes also served in the cavalry. There were two regiments of Negro cavalry, the 9th and the 10th. They saw duty all over the West, from the border of Mexico clear up to Canada. The Indians called them "Buffalo Soldiers" because their tight curly hair looked like buffalo hair. They fought in many battles with the Indians. Negro cavalry captured Geronimo.

Sometimes Negro soldiers even fought against Negro Indians. One Negro who was on both sides was James Beckwith. He was a trapper, frontiersman, army scout and Indian fighter. He was also a member of several Indian tribes. When he died he was a chief of the Crows.

BESIDES WORKING AS cowboys or being

in the cavalry, Negroes were also farmers, trappers, prospectors and miners. A few owned saloons, hotels, dance halls and gambling houses. And some were outlaws.

Was being a cook for cowboys like being a cook today? How was it different?

One outlaw was Ben Hodges of Dodge City. He was a swindler, forger and cattle thief. Nobody trusted him but most people liked him. They thought his plans were funny. It was hard to find a jury that would convict him of anything. He lived a long life. When he died, he was buried near the founding fathers of Dodge City so that "they could keep an eye on him".

Another Negro outlaw who was not so well liked was Cherokee Bill. He was a robber and a killer. By the time he was 20 years old, he had killed so many people that the judge who sentenced him to hang said he was a monster. They asked him if he had any last words as he stood on the gallows. He said, "No. I came here to die—not to make a speech."

There were many Negro outlaws and there were many Negroes who rode with the posses that tried to catch them. Negroes rode with Billy the Kid and Negro cavalry rode after them. Negroes had a part in just about everything that happened in the west. Many were famous for bronco busting and for bulldogging.

Rodeo workers today say that Bill Pickett, a Negro, invented bulldogging. Pickett worked on the same ranch with Tom Mix and Will Rogers. In the early 1900's, they went around the country putting on shows. Pickett's bulldogging act was always one of the highlights of the show.

Today in books, movies and television, the old West is lily white. Why don't they show some of the Negroes who worked and fought to win the West? Even in his place in history, the Negro finds himself the first to be fired.

Reconstruction

WHEN THE CIVIL War ended, people in the North couldn't decide what to do with the South. Before the war, almost all of the best land and most of the slaves were owned by a small number of white people. These slaveowners made most of the decisions about how the South was run. They were also the people who started the war. Many northerners wanted to pardon the slaveowners and let them run the South again. President Lincoln felt that way. When Lincoln was shot, his Vice President, Andrew Johnson, became President. He wanted to forgive the Confederates too.

For the first two years after the war ended, Johnson allowed the white southerners to run the South. The Confederates set out to make the South just the way it had been before the war. They did not own the Negroes any more, but they passed many laws, called Black Codes, which made the Negroes almost like slaves again. These laws said that Negroes had to have jobs. If a Negro left his job, he could be arrested.

During those years, black people tried to find ways to get the freedom they had been promised. In some places they organized into

ment have mass meetings at local levels?

Democratic Party to fight for their rights. In 1865, in Florida, one of the Freedom Parties even held a Freedom Vote like the people of Mississippi did in 1963 and 1964. Negroes were no longer slaves, but they were not citizens either. They did not become citizens until the 14th Amendment to the Constitution was passed. They did not get the right to vote until the 15th Amendment was passed in 1865.

There were many people in the North who didn't like the way the President was letting the white southerners take over again. They wanted to "reconstruct" society in the South so that equality and democracy would replace rule by a few. They were called "radicals". Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner were two radical Republicans who led the Reconstruction program in Congress.

THE FREED SLAVES wanted to change things in the South too. They wanted to own their own land. They wanted education. They wanted a voice in how things were run.

During the war, many slaves took over the plantations when the Union army chased the owners away. The soldiers told the slaves that Congress would give them the land to keep after the war. The slaves set up their own governments. They built roads and schools and churches. And they got guns to protect themselves. Sometimes when the Confederates came back to their plantations after the war the people who had been their slaves kept them away with guns.

When the radical Republicans took over the Reconstruction program in Congress, things began to look much better for black people in the South. All over the South Negroes and also poor whites organized together into what they called Union Leagues. Union Leagues were very much like the Freedom Democratic Party is today. They

held mass meetings once a week in churches and schools. They talked about the kind of government they wanted in the South.

During Reconstruction, Negroes held many government offices. There were two black Senators in Washington, D.C.: Hiram R. Revels and Blanche K. Bruce. They were both elected from Mississippi. There were also 14 black Congressmen in the House of Representatives. One of these men was Robert Smalls from South Carolina. He was a hero in the Civil War. He stole a Confederate gun boat and sailed it out of a southern harbor right under the noses of the Confederate guards. He turned over the ship to the Union army. Later he was made a Union officer.

There were also many Negroes in state and local governments. There were black police, judges, lawyers and sheriffs in the South.

Before the war, only rich people could afford to get an education. Only people who owned land could vote. Poor white people were not much better off than Negroes. The poor whites and Negroes who were elected during Reconstruction passed laws that said you didn't have to own land to vote. They passed laws so that everyone could get an education. They gave more rights to women and passed civil rights bills.

Most history books in the South don't say that Negroes and poor whites passed good laws during Reconstruction. They say the Negroes did not have enough education to pass good laws. Actually, many of the Negroes who were elected were well educated. Besides, you don't have to have an education to know what people need. When someone is sick, you don't have to go to school to know that he needs medical care. And when someone can't read, anyone knows he needs education. Actually the Reconstruction legislatures passed many very good laws. While they

Should Negroes run for office even if they don't think they'll get elected? Is everyone "qualified" to run?

What would it be like if Negroes were sheriffs today?

were in power there was more democracy in the South than there ever has been since. The Reconstruction legislatures passed laws that were good for everybody, not just a few of the people.

HISTORY BOOKS ALSO talk about how the white people were afraid that the blacks would "take over". But the black people never had enough power to "take over" even if they had wanted to. There were always many white people in power too. The Negroes in the South depended on help from Congress and the North. For a while, when free Negroes made up a majority of the voters in the South, the Negroes got the support they needed. But the government began to pardon more and more of the old Confederates. The Democratic Party began to come back into power in the South.

All along, the white southerners did everything they could think of to keep Negroes from getting power. Most of all they tried to keep Negroes from voting. They organized secret groups like the Ku Klux Klan. They tried to get their old power back by burning, beating and killing. They also began to pass new laws which took away voting rights from Negroes. But there were still federal troops in the South. And the Union Leagues still had guns to defend themselves. So at first the white southerners didn't get too far.

But in 1876, the election for President was very close. There were three Southern states that turned in two sets of votes. The slaveowners had separate elections and they voted for the Democrat, Tilden. Negroes and poor whites voted for Hayes, the Republican. Congress set up a committee to decide which set of votes should be counted.

Hayes wanted to make sure he became President. He talked to the people on the committee who were in favor of the slaveowners. He

said that if they counted his votes instead of Tilden's, he would pull the federal troops out of the South. That meant that Negroes and poor whites would no longer have federal protection. So, in 1877, President Hayes sold out the cause of democracy. Klan violence increased as soon as the federal troops were gone.

Do black people and white people work together today? How?

After Hayes was elected, many Negroes and poor whites in the South felt that the Republican Party didn't really care about them anymore. They also knew that the Democratic Party was run by old Confederates. They were confused about which party to vote for.

THEN, IN THE 1890's, a third party was organized to oppose the other two.

It was called the Populist, or Peoples Party. The Populists said that poor whites and Negroes should stick together. As long as they were set against each other, their wages would be low and they would never get anywhere. One Populist leader, Tom Watson, said the party would "wipe out the color line."

The Democrats were afraid the Populists would take over the South. They tried to split the union of poor whites and Negroes. They blamed Negroes for all the troubles of the South and they preached hatred of Negroes. The Democratic Party, with help from the Klan, started race riots and lynchings. Many of the poor whites in the Populist Party began to turn against Negroes.

The next step was to take the right to vote away from more Negroes. Each of the southern states passed laws to keep Negroes from voting. Mississippi was the first in 1890. By 1910, all the states in the South had such laws. These laws had to be tricky. The 15th Amendment said it was illegal to take away the Negro's right to vote. One

What is the difference between Democrats and Republicans? Who do they represent? How are they the same?

kind of tricky law was called a "grandfather clause." It said that anyone who was a voter in 1867, or the descendant of someone who was a voter then, did not have to take a literacy test. Since almost no Negroes could vote in 1867, the law meant that all Negroes had to take a literacy test while most white people didn't. This way the states could use a very hard literacy test and fail all the Negroes.

By losing the Negro vote, the Populist Party was cut in half. More and more they tried to get white votes by talking against Negroes. By 1906, even Tom Watson turned against Negroes. By then the Democrats were all the way back in power. The Populist Party slowly died out. Negroes and poor whites were left without any voice in the decisions that affected their lives.

AFTER THE DEMOCRATS finished taking away the right to vote from Negroes, they started taking away many other rights too. The system of segregation laws which we call Jim Crow began to grow all over the South. By 1900, all the southern states had Jim Crow laws for trains. A few had segregation on street cars too. After 1900, the South started to segregate everything it could think of.

In the next 20 years, almost every point of contact between the races was covered by a Jim Crow law. If laws missed something, custom soon segregated that thing anyway. Segregation became so much the way of life in the South that most people believed it must have always been that way.

BALLOT
BOX

W. E. B. Du Bois

IN 1868, TWO things happened which were very important for the Negro people of America. One was the signing of the 15th amendment which gave Negroes the right to vote. The other was the birth of William Edward Burghardt Du Bois.

Du Bois grew up in Massachusetts. He went to Fisk University. In the summers he traveled around in the back country and taught at log cabin Negro schools. He went to Harvard University. Later he received the first Ph.D. Harvard had ever awarded to a Negro. For 13 years he taught at Atlanta University. During this time he published many studies on Negro life. He became an expert on the American Negro.

AT THIS TIME, the most powerful Negro in America was Booker T. Washington. Washington was the founder of Tuskegee Institute, the famous Negro trade school in Alabama. He was also the unofficial leader of the Negro race in the United States. Washington had reached his important position because he said things which white people liked to hear.

One of his most famous speeches was called

grading way in which many Negroes were treated. They demanded full rights for Negroes at once.

A new Group grew out of the Niagara Movement in 1909. This was the NAACP. For those days the NAACP was a very militant group. It protested against many forms of discrimination. Its main way of fighting was with court cases. Du Bois was the only Negro among the NAACP's first officers. He was the editor of the NAACP magazine, the **Crisis.** Du Bois edited the **Crisis** for many years. He used it as a voice for Negro desires.

In 1919, at the end of World War I, Du Bois organized a Pan African Congress which met in France. This was a meeting where Negroes from all over the world could get together and talk. Du Bois felt that both blacks and whites in America made the mistake of thinking of Negroes as only a minority with white people the majority. In the world, white people are a minority and colored people are the majority.

At that Congress, Du Bois learned about discrimination against American Negro soldiers in World War 1. The United States army had asked the French not to be friendly with Negro soldiers. The army had said that, in the United States, Negroes were considered "a menace". Du Bois printed this information in the **Crisis.** The government was very upset. The Post Office would not mail the **Crisis** for a few days. But finally it was mailed. Negroes got to hear how their soldiers were treated.

Du Bois was an intellectual himself and he believed that many more Negroes would have to become educated before equality would be attained. As he grew older, he became more and more bitter about the possibility of Negroes ever attaining equal rights in this country. He moved more and more to the left in his political beliefs. He began to spend most of his time working for Pan

What do you think freedom and equality mean? How do people get freedom and equality?

What does it mean when people go to jail for things they think are right? Is it good or bad?

African unity, socialism and world peace. He believed they had to come first before real freedom and equality would be possible for black people.

To Du Bois, freedom and equality meant more than being able to vote or to buy a house or to get a job. It meant that everyone should have enough food and clothes and a warm house, even if he couldn't get a job. It meant men shouldn't have to work long hours for little pay when someone else got all the money from their work. It meant the United States government shouldn't oppress people in the rest of the world.

Du Bois opposed the Korean War and said that Negroes should not fight against other people of color. The United States government put him in jail for his peace work just as today it puts in jail some people who oppose the war in Vietnam. Du Bois won his case and went free. But after he had been in jail some people no longer respected him or listened to him.

Du Bois was then an old man. He decided to leave the United States and travel over the world. He also joined the Communist Party. Finally he settled in Ghana, Africa, where the black people welcomed him. But Du Bois did not forget his people in America. In 1961, when he was 93, he wanted to join the Freedom Riders in the South. His friends thought he was too old to go but they had a hard time stopping him.

DU BOIS WAS AN important leader for black people in America and all over the world. His wisdom and courage helped Negroes all during the years from Reconstruction to the modern movement. In 1963, on the night before the March on Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois died.

If world government were decided by a one man-one vote, would most of the delegates be white or colored?

The Modern Movement

BY THE BEGINNING of the 20th Century, the Negroes in America were in many ways as badly off as they had been under slavery. Legally Negroes were free, but in fact they labored under economic and political and social slavery little different from the past. Negroes who left the South found themselves crowded into northern ghettos, unable to get work.

Even the trade union movement, which was organizing workers to try for better working conditions and higher wages, usually did not let Negroes join. White businessmen used the old southern trick of playing Negroes and poor white workers against each other. When a union threatened to strike for higher wages, the boss would threaten to fire all the strikers and hire Negroes instead. A lot of Negroes needed work so badly that they were willing to work for very low wages. That way businessmen tricked Negroes and poor whites into fighting each other instead of joining together to work for higher wages. Because of this, when a company did recognize a union, that only meant that Negroes had a harder time getting jobs.

Negroes did not give up fighting and hop-

What is a cop? What does he do? What do you think he should do?

ing, but very little was gained during those years. In the South, more and more black landowners lost their land. They had to become sharecroppers or leave the South. In the North, a system of defacto segregation grew as more and more Negroes migrated to the cities and were confined in ghettos. grated to the cities and were confined in ghettos. Lynching continued in the South, and race riots happened more and more often in the North. Throughout the 20th century, as he has always done, the Negro kept on protesting his inhuman condition.

THEN CAME 1960. Almost 100 years after the Civil War, four Negro students sat down at a Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. They were courteous and well behaved. They asked only what was theirs by right—that they be allowed to eat like anyone else. Their tactic was an old one, and yet it was revolutionary. It was simply refusing to accept injustice. The tactic had been used before. There had been sit-ins and freedom rides before. But somehow 1960 was different. The movement spread at once. All over the South other students also held sit-ins. Within days, thousands of young people were sitting-in and being attacked and arrested.

Two months later, in April, 1960, some of the sit-in students organized the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee with the help of SNCC advisor Ella Baker. SNCC set up communications between the many different groups that were demonstrating.

In 1961 came the freedom rides to protest discrimination in interstate travel. There had been Supreme Court decisions outlawing such segregation before. But it was not until the freedom rides that Jim Crow was finally kicked out of the bus stations. People came from all across the country

to try to integrate bus stations nonviolently. In Alabama and Mississippi buses were attacked and burned. Many freedom riders were beaten and arrested. Since then the Movement has gone on and grown, aided by such people as Harry Belafonte and many unsung Negroes.

Do poor white people have "freedom"? If not, how do you think they should try and get it?

WHAT IS THE Movement? On the outside, it is civil rights organizations like CORE, SNCC, SCLC and the NAACP. It is places like Albany, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; McComb, Mississippi; and Lowndes County, Alabama. It is people like Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and Fannie Lou Hamer. To people across the country, reading newspapers and watching on television, the Movement is the horror of bombed churches and senseless murders. It is the excitement of a March on Washington or a Selma to Montgomery March.

On the inside, the Movement is day-to-day hard work. It is walking and knocking on doors and talking to people. It is people getting together in mass meetings. It is fear and learning how to overcome fear. And maybe most of all, the Movement is people learning to ask questions.

Mississippi is a good example. In many ways Mississippi is one of the worst states in the country. The Movement decided to concentrate on Mississippi. CORE, SNCC, SCLC and the NAACP have all worked in Mississippi and still work there.

In the fall of 1961, some people began to question whether public accommodations testing was enough to do in the fight for equal rights. They saw that most Negroes were too poor to eat in the white man's restaurant, even when they had the right to. Some people decided that what Negroes needed more than public accommodations was the right to vote. If Negroes could vote, then they could have some voice in making decisions

If you were a civil rights worker, what would you do to help people overcome their fear?

about their lives. So a voter registration project was started in southwest Mississippi.

Voter registration workers found it was very hard to get Negroes registered. They found that most white people didn't want Negroes registered now any more than they had wanted them registered back in Reconstruction. The white people were still using the same methods to keep Negroes from voting. The registration test was hard. There were no rules to say who passed and who failed the test. The Registrar just decided. If you were black, you probably wouldn't pass, even if you answered all the questions right. If you did pass, your name was published in the paper. You might lose your job or be shot at. Even if you did get registered, you couldn't help decide who would be candidates. Often you weren't allowed to vote. People began to question whether just trying to get Negroes registered was enough.

Then someone had a new idea—freedom registration. Freedom registration forms asked only a few simple questions about how old you were and where you lived. You didn't have to take a test. Anyone who wanted to register could.

In 1963, a freedom vote was held in Mississippi. Negroes who had not been able to register but who wanted to vote could vote in the freedom vote. It was not an official election. But it showed that 80,000 Negroes in Mississippi knew how to vote and who they wanted to vote for. People asked more questions about what it meant if so many people in Mississippi wanted to vote and were not allowed to vote. Some people decided that it meant that the regular Mississippi Democratic Party candidates were not legally elected since they did not represent the majority of the people in the state.

People decided to set up a new democratic party called the Freedom Democratic Party. This

new party would challenge the legality of the regular Democratic Party.

During the summer of 1964, civil rights workers all over Mississippi talked to people and freedom registered people and helped to set up the FDP. The FDP sent democratically elected representatives to Atlantic City to challenge the representatives of the regular Democratic Party at the Party convention. But the national Democratic Party refused to seat the FDP representatives. That made a lot of people ask more questions about democracy and our national government.

The FDP had a freedom vote and elected Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Devine and Mrs. Gray to represent them in Congress instead of the regular Democratic candidates. Then they went to Washington, D.C. to challenge the seating of the regular Democratic candidates because they were elected illegally. During the Challenge, there was lots of testimony gathered about how black people in Mississippi were not allowed to register or vote. The testimony proved that the Mississippi Congressmen were not legally elected. But the House of Representatives voted to seat the regular Representatives anyway. It voted to deny democracy in Mississippi.

Now people in Mississippi are asking questions again. What does it mean when Congress accepts members who are not elected legally? What kind of Congress is it? What kind of voice in the government do people really have? How can people get their fair share of representation in this government which is supposed to be theirs?

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE that one of the best ways to get equal rights is to make the nation aware of all the ways Negroes are discriminated against. These people say that when the country becomes aware of the injustices, it will act to cor-

What do you think Negroes should do to make the Democratic and Republican parties do more about their needs?

What laws do you know about that you think are unjust? Do you think you should disobey these laws?

rect the injustices with new laws, such as the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. Martin Luther King, Jr. is the most famous spokesman for this point of view.

Dr. King first became well known during the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955. In Montgomery, the Negro people chose to stop riding city buses rather than ride at the back of the bus. They held a boycott which lasted over a year. They formed car pools to take each other to work. When an injunction was passed banning car pools, the black people of Montgomery walked to work. Finally they won their right to sit where they chose.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was formed as a result of the boycott and Dr. King became its President. Dr. King has since led demonstrations in many different places both in the South and the North. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, and he has become famous all over the world for his work in the freedom movement. Dr. King was the leader of the Selma to Montgomery march in the spring of 1965.

Dr. King believes that Negroes should continue to use nonviolent means of protest, but he admits that it is hard to be nonviolent. He has often said that Negroes in America cannot be expected to stay nonviolent if the country does not respond to Negro demands for justice. Dr. King says that there are just laws and unjust laws. He says people have a moral responsibility to obey just laws. But they also have a moral responsibility **not** to obey unjust laws. A just law, Dr. King says, is one which "uplifts human personality. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust . . . All segregation statutes are unjust . . ."

Dr. King also says that any law is unjust which affects a minority which had no voice in making the law but which does not affect the majority which made the law. "In disobeying such unjust laws," says Dr. King, "we do so peacefully,

openly and nonviolently. Most importantly, we willingly accept the penalty, whatever it is. But in this way the public comes to reexamine the law in question."

Does the U. S. Government do a good job of enforcing the civil rights laws it passes?

Many people feel that Dr. King's approach is the right one. But other people question whether new laws will ever bring the Negroes real freedom. In 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States made a ruling that separate schools were not equal and that schools in the South were to integrate with all reasonable speed. In the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title VI says that federal funds will be cut off from any school which is not integrated unless it turns in a plan for integration which is accepted. In spite of these federal laws which were passed to correct the injustice of segregated schools, before 1964 only 1.2% of the Negro school children in the 11 states of the old confederacy attended integrated schools. Since 1964 the number is still less than 10%.

Dr. King believes with many that this approach has been slow but he sees this as being the best way the Movement can go forward. Some disagreed with this way. Among them was Malcolm X, the militant black leader who was shot to death early in 1965. Malcolm said, "The political philosophy of Black Nationalism means: we must control the politics and the politicans of our community. They must no longer take orders from outside forces. We will organize, and sweep out of office all Negro politicians who are puppets for the outside forces." This is the kind of thing that many black people in the South are beginning to say now. They are beginning to think that black people should control the politics in communities where black people are a majority.

Malcolm did not think new laws would better things for Negroes. What was needed, he said, was that the laws we already have be fully enforced. He talked about some of the reasons why

How was Malcolm's position different from Dr. King's? Can the two positions help each other?

laws are not enforced. He said, "The Constitution itself has within it the machinery to expel any Representative from a state where the voting rights of the people are violated. You don't even need new legislation . . . If the black man in these southern states had his full voting right, the key Dixiecrats in Washington, D. C. . . . would lose their seats. The Democratic Party itself would lose its power . . . When you see the amount of power that would be lost by the Democratic Party if it were to lose the Dixiecrat wing . . . you can see where it's against the interests of the Democrats to give voting rights to Negroes in states where the Democrats have been in complete power and authority ever since the Civil War."

Malcolm also believed that Negroes should defend themselves. He said he would be nonviolent only if other people were nonviolent with him. He said that since segregation was illegal, anyone who tried to enforce segregation was a criminal and should be treated as a criminal, even if he was a chief of police or a sheriff. He said, "In areas where our people are the constant victims of brutality, and the government seems unable or unwilling to protect them, we should form rifle clubs that can be used to defend our lives and our property in times of emergency . . . the time has come for the American Negro to fight back in self-defense whenever and wherever he is being unjustly and unlawfully attacked."

Not all black people agree with Malcolm X and not all black people agree with Dr. King. Many people have different ideas of how you get freedom and equality. But many black people are beginning to feel that they must find ways of controlling and bettering their lives if they are ever to attain real freedom and equality. New questions are being asked about control. Where does it come

from? Who really controls a community? How can people who live there get control of their own community?

Do you think the idea of the Freedom Labor Union can be used in other parts of the country?

IN MISSISSIPPI, PEOPLE are searching for new ways to gain control over their lives. One idea is the Freedom Labor Union. The FLU started when the workers on one plantation went on strike for higher wages and better conditions. They were thrown out of their houses and are living in tents. They are trying to develop new ways of making a living. New branches of the FLU are being formed in other parts of Mississippi.

In Mississippi there is also a Poor People's Corporation. This is an organization where poor people can get money to start their own cooperative businesses. This way people can own their own companies instead of being hired to work for someone else.

In Alabama, black people are setting up a separate political party which will represent their interests. Some people call this a "third" party. They mean it is number 3 next to the Democratic and Republican parties. But for Negroes in the Alabama Black Belt, it is the "first" party.

Where is the Movement going? That depends on the people in it, the questions they ask, the decisions they make.

When did the Movement start? Was it in 1775 when the first abolitionist society was formed? Or in 1663 when the first slave revolt was planned? Maybe it was in 1526 when the first slaves ran away and joined the Indians. Then again, you might say that it began thousands of years ago when, even then, human beings were oppressed by their fellow men and they found that there is something in the human spirit which can't stand chains . . . .

A Note to Anyone Who Wants to Know More About Negro History

When we wrote this book, we were in Mississippi. We didn't have a big library. All we had was a freedom school library. We can tell you about some of the books we liked and learned from. But there are many other books about Negroes which we don't know about.

The book we liked best was *Before the Mayflower* by Lerone Bennett. This book is written in a way that is easy to read. It tells the story of Negro history. It starts back in Africa before any Negroes were brought to America. It carries the story all the way up to the civil rights movement today.

Another book that is easy to read is a pamphlet by the New York City Board of Education. It is called "The Negro in American History."

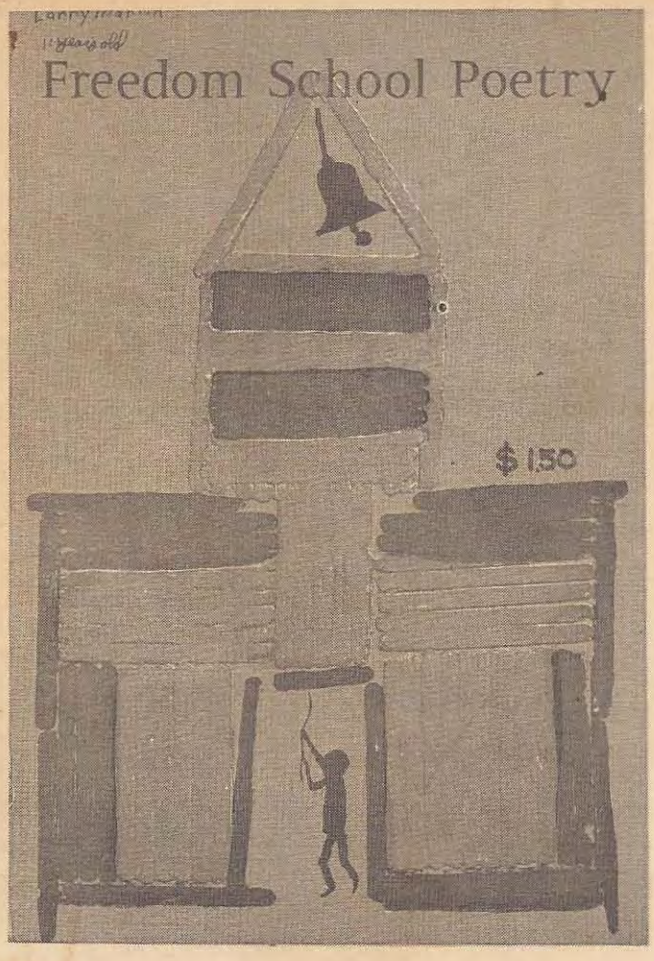
Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps have both written children's books about famous Negroes which students might like to read. Shirley Graham's biography of Frederick Douglass is another good children's book.

For freedom schools or classrooms, one of the best books we found is *A Pictorial History of The Negro in America*, edited by Langston Hughes. Also, *Ebony* magazine has run many stories on Negro history and famous Negroes which might be very good to use in classes.

For people who want more background, we got a lot of information from the following books: *Black Reconstruction in America* by W. E. B. Du Bois, Herbert Aptheker's series of pamphlets on Negroes in American history, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* by C. Van Woodward, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* by Douglass, *Negro Cowboys* by Durham and Jones, and the *Freedomways* memorial issue on Du Bois.

While not specifically about Negro history, two books which talk about American history in terms of people living and working are *We The People* by Leo Huberman and *Labor's Untold Story* by Boyer and Morais.

—f.c. & b.c.



FREEDOM SCHOOL POETRY BOOKS, a product of the life and struggle of Mississippi Black students participating in the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964, can be obtained by sending a donation of $1.50 to SNCC, 360 Nelson St., S. W., Atlanta 14, Georgia.

contributions:

Many copies of *NEGROES IN AMERICAN HISTORY* have been given away. Money sent to us will help others to read it. The Student Voice is located at:

360 Nelson Street, S. W.
Atlanta 14, Georgia.