

# **The Imported Americans**

**A Primer on African-American History in America**

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On the night of February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012, a 17-year-old black man in Sanford, Florida was returning to his father's fiance's home in a gated community. It was late in a winter afternoon, chilly and growing dark. Another man, George Zimmerman, who lived in the area and considered himself as a sort of unofficial local constabulary, was patrolling the area. On encountering Trayvon Martin, Zimmerman called the local police to say that a stray black man was walking around in his neighborhood. The local police advised him to ignore the man and go on about his business. But he did not. The incident that followed is wrapped in confusing claims and the deadly lack of counter-claims. the undisputed outcome is that a confrontation occurred, the result of which was that Zimmerman shot Trayvon Martin and Martin died.

A lot of people had comments about the Trayvon Martin-George Zimmerman incident. Martin is dead and Zimmerman, who shot him, is alive and was acquitted of any deliberate malice in the shooting. There are multiple accusations and implications of this situation, not the least of which is the strong feeling among African-Americans that this was simply another unwarranted shooting death of an African-American male.

The fact is that one day, Americans must look in the mirror and accept the fact that we live in a society that has long designated Blacks as second class citizens, and greatly diminished the value of a single life if that life is wrapped in a skin of a darker color. Many Americans understand this and regret it. And almost all Black Americans feel it in their bones. Why? History of course, the history of a clearly racist society that created tiers based on color and entitlement based on economic status that grew out of that entitlement.

The history of the White man in America is one of opportunity, encouragement, growth, education and financial security. At least that has been a trend that we could chart upwards from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Immigrants struggled, but were allowed to live in most areas. Immigrants were uneducated but their

children had almost unlimited educational opportunities. Immigrants lived in shelters or tenements but their work created a family that was respected, treated fairly, and could move up the social ladder.

But the history of the Black man in America is completely different. These men and women did not immigrate here. They were imported. The Imported Americans...most of whom had no idea that this continent or this country even existed. They were Americans because—after all--we are all Americans. But African-Americans were the only Imported Americans, bought and sold by other Americans to be enslaved, to work in the fields of the grand plantations of their American masters.

The Imported Americans came as slaves, never better than second class citizens. In 1787 they were officially designated to be three-fifths of the value of White Americans. They never asked to be stolen, kidnapped and exported from their lands. They were taken by insensitive, avaricious slave dealers from both the Northern and Southern states and treated with such inhumanity as it is difficult to comprehend in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

How did the myths about slavery and the disaster that it eventually became for the entire country come about. And what were the consequences for the human beings we began to Import as far back as the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century? From 1619 to 1859 when the last slave ship, the “Clotilde” docked in Mobile, Alabama we imported 600,000 human beings from Africa to the United States and sold them at good prices to other human beings. We stopped importing human beings in 1860.

In the early 1600s, slaves were sold in all states, including Massachusetts and Connecticut. In fact, in the 1640s, a Captain William Pierce sailed from New England to the West Indies to purchase slaves. By the mid-1640s, however, laws about the treatment of slaves were introduced into the New England colonies. Other ships from ports in New England transported slaves to the West Indies where they were treated as goods, exchanged for other goods, like sugar and tobacco which were then traded in New England for manufactured goods. The generally recognized date for the beginning of real slavery, as opposed to indentured servitude, was 1619. In that year, 19 slaves, captured from the Spanish by the Dutch, the

leading slave traders of that era, were disembarked in Jamestown, Virginia. In those days of indentured servitude, the difference between slave and indentured servant was not as distinct.

What was it like being a captive on a slave ship crossing the Atlantic? Here's one description:

“...the air soon became unfit for respiration from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought a sickness amongst the slaves of which many died thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable, and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying rendered the whole scene of horror almost inconceivable.” --Olaudah Equiano, a former slave transported on a slave ship

And then things got worse.

In the early days of slavery in the United States, both indentured servitude and outright slavery had its own term limits. A man could be enslaved or indentured for 7 years, for example, and then be free. There were, in fact, numerous free Black men living in the colonies. But soon the advent of large scale sugar, tobacco and eventually cotton farming made slaves a necessity and attitudes changed.

By 1705, a Virginia law said that if a slaveholder should kill a slave in the course of disciplining him or her, it was no crime. The slave was, the courts said, of no more or less value than a piece of real estate. Virginia was not alone. All 15 early slave states had slave codes. Under these codes, slaves could not marry, learn to read, or leave their owner's plantation without permission. In general, and in practice slave owners who killed a slave during punishment for an “offense” were themselves never punished.

In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, in 1865 and 1866, Black Codes were initiated in southern states to restrict movement and social mobility. In the north, where earlier the same kinds of laws had been drawn up, they were used to influence freed black men and slaves not to move north. The Black Codes were used in the antebellum South to regulate the conduct of African-Americans. Not slaves, but

free Blacks. They could not gather together in groups, own guns, learn to read or write, or testify against Whites at a trial.

The regulations grew stronger as slavery increased, particularly as slavery became a permanent way of life for many Blacks. With no hope of freedom, slaves rebelled. There were numerous slave rebellions, the most notable of which was the Nat Turner Rebellion of 1831. Nat Turner was a very bright and self-educated slave, raised and living in Virginia, very religious and a person who seemed to other slaves to have somewhat Messianic visions.

On August 21, 1831, prompted by what Turner believed to be signs in the sky, Turner organized and initiated a slave revolt that spread across an area of Virginia and resulted in the brutal murders of 50 or 60 White men, women and children. The members of the Rebellion were captured and killed and the subsequent repercussions not only resulted in the eventual murders of several hundred more slaves, but contributed to laws that strictly forbade education to Blacks both free and enslaved in most southern states.

One of the serious aftermaths of the Nat Turner Rebellion was the prohibition against education for “Negroes” across the South. As a result, by the end of the Civil War and the initiation of the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments, hardly any slave was literate. In fact, although Southern White literacy was not much better, by 1900 only about 20% of African Americans in the South could read or write.

By 1860, there were 4,000,000 slaves in the United States. Almost all of whom were confined to plantations in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas, Maryland and Delaware and parts of Missouri had slaves although those states fought on the Union side in the Civil War.

Today, the third and fourth generations of those rich plantation owners are very often wealthy men. They live in lovely areas of Charleston and New Orleans and Savannah and Jackson, educated, sophisticated and frequently horrified at what their ancestors did to African slaves. But the value of the assets that their

forbears accumulated and passed down, not only in tangible worth but education and culture cannot be overestimated. More importantly, neither can their unspeakable oppression of African-American slaves, resulting in subsequent lost generations—in ignorance and poverty and despair and early deaths.

After the Civil War, the Imported Americans, who had been enslaved, were forced into tenant farming, basically a class below peasant, bound to the land by ignorance, immobility and Black Codes, which went so far as to forbid Black men from standing or occupying public space on grounds of vagrancy. Within a few years of the end of the war, African-Americans were legally denied education. This made them the designees for every piece of humiliating and often deliberately degrading manual labor that could be devised over the next 100 years.

There were two signal events that changed the world for freedmen in the South and set the country on its path to a disastrous outcome...the creation of a second-class citizenry that has resulted in a two-tier economy, obstructive and wasteful politics, bankrupt cities and huge holes in the fabric of our society, where ghettos of African-Americans have been lodged.

The first event was the creation of the Jim Crow laws or the post-Civil War re-interpretation of the Black Codes. The basic issue was to create a sense of vagrancy. Through a variety of provisions prohibiting the movement of Black men, the basic idea was to create an ages-old designation of an individual as a vagrant. A Black man could not merely occupy a public space. To be a Black man without a specific reason to be somewhere was interpreted as vagrancy and vagrancy led to arrest and arrest led to jail and jail would often result in being “hired out” by the town to farms and plantations. Vagrancy was a simple means of controlling the Black population and even adding to the slave-wage work force.

In South Carolina, a black man could not enter the state from another state without a written letter of recommendation. He could not work except as a farmer or a servant. And, of course, if he were to be arrested for vagrancy, he could be imprisoned and the authorities could hire him out to a landowner to work off his penalties.

The answer to “Where are you going?” for a black man in the South was not what it was for a White man or what it is today for any of us, namely, “None of your business.” For a White man in the South, it was a meaningful question and its outcome might have dollars attached. So, by the year 2013, Trayvon Martin was only the latest of the millions of black men challenged in the South, and his fate was no different from that of any Black man of a previous century who could have been, as many say Trayvon was-- lynched--for his improper response.

The second circumstance concerning the Imported Americans that set our country on its unfortunate course was connected closely with the first. It was tenant farming and sharecropping. If you were a freedman after the Civil War, that is a freed slave, you had nothing. And worse, with the Black Codes, you were required to either be on your own property, your small piece of land that you farmed for a landowner or you had to be somewhere out of sight. You did not have the luxury of even being seen in public for fear of arrest and shipment off to a work gang.

The South, after the Civil War was broke. Plantation owners could not afford to hire ex-slaves as farm labor. The result was a system of tenant farming. Blacks and poor whites could lease a piece of land on which they would grow and tend crops and then share revenues with the landowner. This was good for the landowner who had no cash. It was good initially for ex-slaves who had nothing...no education, no real skills, no money and no education.

These two things...the Black Codes, which became the Jim Crow laws—in particular the denial of education and voting rights plus the system of sharecropping ...set the tone for what would be the greatest and most ruinous part of the American way of life.

The result was a segment of the population bred and maintained for field work, backbreaking agricultural labor. Now the descendants of the Imported Americans, those who have no been able to overcome the monumental odds against them are reviled for exhibiting the very qualities that the plantation owners literally bred into them. The Imported Americans were human beings literally bought and sold, bred and

directed towards manual work, back-breaking manual work in the fields...and nothing else. And they were treated in a manner more appropriate for domestic animals than for human beings.

The additional problem for the South and for the United States today is that some Southerners have never lost that cynical, cruel attitude towards African-Americans. Our political system of compromise and majority rule encouraged a far slower growth for a minority than should be expected. Consequently, with the old Southern Democrats, then the Dixiecrats and now the Republicans...one hundred and fifty years after the end of the Civil War, racism still permeates everything in our political system. Racist votes hold up legislation on global warming. Racism dictates policy on women's health and health care in general. Racism dictates military policy, makes precarious the social safety network and allows Billionaires and corporations to run state after state legislature.

Even more depressing, even alarming, is that many of the Congressmen from the South exhibit or even flaunt those tendencies in public and show it in their votes. If there is a way to punish the descendants of the original Imported Americans, they will find it. In fact, in some Southern states the poor laws that were abolished in Great Britain in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century astonishingly have returned to some Southern states.

After the period of the Republican Reconstruction of the South, about 1876, the Black Codes began to transform into a more frank, open and definitively racist form of legislation. The Southern Democrats had become stronger as their methods of intimidation and violence continued to win them more and more elections. Soon they introduced legislation to deprive Blacks of their civil rights and neither the Supreme Court nor the Republican Party prevented it. Southern violence never left the South and has never been appropriately punished.

Black Codes became the Jim Crow laws. Blacks could not own homes. They could not work or shop in certain stores. They were disenfranchised with the use of poll taxes and literacy tests. In Louisiana, for example, by 1900, the population of Black voters was reduced to slightly more than 5,000 and by 1910

was reduced to a mere 730, although Blacks were the majority of the population. In North Carolina, not a single Black voter was registered between 1896 and 1905

Blacks constituted absolute majorities of the populations in Mississippi, Louisiana and South Carolina and represented 40% of the population in four other former Confederate states. Obviously, with ex-slaves dominating the voting population, Southern Whites fought back outside the legal system.

While even some analysts of the slave era such as W.E. DuBois admit that there was some small amount of paternalism, a few good relationships between some masters and slaves, in the final analysis, it was still slavery. It was unthinkable to Southern Whites that the system could easily be reversed and slave become master through the simple power of the vote.

So the first legislation coming out of the South after the war said that only those who were literate before January 1, 1867 or whose father or grandfather had been eligible to vote before that date, were now eligible to vote. This is the origin of the term “grandfathered in” to an organization. Obviously, slaves did not have the vote prior to January 1, 1867 nor did free blacks in most cases, at least after the reforms that arose from the Nat Turner Rebellion of 1831. Thus, the post-Civil War black codes almost completely voided the voting rights of African Americans.

This continues in the sub-culture of the South to this very day. Many African-Americans have been jailed for nothing more than owing a parking ticket, which grew to more fines and penalties and longer sentences. It is the latest version of Jim Crow returned to haunt American society. And it is happening because Ronald Reagan told the Segregationists that the Republican Party would become racist if they walked away from the Democratic Party and voted for him. And they did, and this is the result.

Nothing in our history has done more to reduce the quality of life for all Americans than this racist mind set blight, this mind set on the part of White Southerners. Based on the voting patterns for the Republicans, former Segregationists like Thurmond and Helms, anti-Civil Rights and intermittently themselves members of the KKK, the South has been turned over to a majority of bigots. With the poorest

educational systems, the poorest people, the worst infrastructure, the lowest wages, the lowest standards of living, the worst health care and worst academic achievement, the least among us seem to be in the old Confederate states.

To this day, many Southern communities still fly the Confederate flag above that of our national flag. To many Americans this is flying the flag of a foreign country that made war on the United States. In the meantime, these people who honor the flag of traitors claim to be patriots. The reasons most Americans resent the Confederate flag is the same reason that the people of the German Republic would resent seeing the Nazi flag still raised over that of the Bundesrepublik.

Despite the many fine and exceptionally learned members of Southern society, the overall culture of the American Southeast is the laughing stock of the world. Southern Americans are the object of ridicule in countries, some of which are a tenth of our size but with double the literacy of American Southerners.

There are White Supremacists among Southern society who have discriminated against African-Americans for the last 300 years and show no signs of relenting in their mindless hatred of people with different colored skin. And those racists, far from being apologetic about enslaving a group of people for 300 years, on the contrary, doubled down on them, and denied them employment, education, medical attention, even enlistment in the military services. They have been beaten, tortured, shot, hanged and set on fire!

The outcome of racism has affected the entire history of the United States. From 1910 through 1930, 1.6 million African-Americans, largely uneducated and illiterate, migrated from the former slave states to the Northeast, Midwest and West. After a lull as a result of the Depression, a great post-World War II generation wave of migration took place between 1950 and 1970. This time, 6 million unskilled African-American workers left the old Confederate states for the North and West.

Only after the penal and discriminatory Jim Crow laws had been made illegal in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century through the work of Northern Liberals and Moderates and the political will of Lyndon Johnson did the

migration of African-Americans begin to reverse somewhat. By the mid-1960s, Northern Blacks had become better educated and Southern Whites had become less educated.

Auto companies and others found good labor markets for unskilled workers in a South legally purged by Federal law of much of its danger and discrimination. Former Southern Blacks could return with far less fear of violence against them. Government now armed them with better ways of protecting themselves against persecution and outright violence.

What caused the great African American migrations from the South of the early and mid-1990s? Was it the Jim Crow laws and the culture of second-class citizenship? Or was it something more? From 1892 through 1951 over 3,500 African-Americans were lynched in the United States, over 90% of them in the 14 former slave states. In 1892, for example, 161 African-Americans were lynched, almost one per month per former Confederate state.

We know from local contemporary reports that the Klu Klux Klan, beginning as early as 1866, was the greatest terrorist force in the United States, including having caused the largest recorded massacre on U.S. soil until "9/11." Some may argue that the Mafia may have done more harm but the Mafia was known to commit criminal acts primarily against other Mafia or others who became involved with them in some illegal enterprise.

The attacks on Freedmen trying to vote began as early as 1866 to prevent voting by Freedmen and southern Republicans. Immediately prior to the elections of 1866, their actions resulted in as many as 2000 deaths in the Carolinas and elsewhere in the former Confederate states. The terrorism was effective. Once again in the Presidential election of November 1868 several thousand more were killed or injured in Louisiana within a few weeks of the election.

In St. Landry Parish where Republicans had a registered majority of 1,071, not one Republican voted in the fall election of 1868, The terrorist activity included the killing of than 150 black Republicans,

including 13 Freedmen taken from jail and shot and more than two dozen more bodies that were later found in the woods.

In Arkansas, there were over 196 political murders in 1868. In Georgia, intimidation was a better tool. In Georgia, with over 9000 Black freedmen on the voting rolls, Grant received only 87 votes.

Lynching is not a synonymous term for hanging. Many African-Americans were recorded to have been lynched who were in reality shot, burned at the stake, castrated and otherwise dismembered until dead. Lynching is merely a name for a cruel combination of racist and sadistic murder.

Even in the most supposedly Liberal, Populist, open and free thinking communities, north and south, African-Americans have been educated in schools maintained from lower property taxes in lower-income neighborhoods and therefore less qualified, poorer equipped, and often simply lacking basics like heating and cooling. The lack of education, work skills and lower incomes of Black families also perpetuate a community of conflict and instability...not suited for educating those who need education most.

To understand the problems of the North and Black migration, one must think of a White family living on its own budget in 1910, suddenly asked—in a sense--to take on the budget of another family, black and totally without any education or social skills that matched White society at any level.

Consider then, that this White family was asked, in hard times, to contribute in taxes and social programs and often charitable programs but perhaps actually give up its income—a job--so that the Black family could survive. This did happen when Black unskilled labor was pitted against White labor by industrialists in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in order to lower wage rates.

So coming out of the South's laws against education and against any kind of social interaction with Whites, how surprised should we be that African-Americans inhabit the lowest rung on our social ladder? Think of a man living today in Chicago, the son of an unwed, high-school-dropout mother, who was the daughter of an uneducated, menial laborer, who was the son of a Black southern dirt farmer, deliberately

and legally forbidden an education, who was the son of a totally illiterate sharecropper who had, in his youth, been a slave, the American-born son of an Imported American.

Of the 7.6 African-American immigrants who moved north, approximately 80% were either totally illiterate or had the most rudimentary education in rundown backwoods schools.

Some people think that when the Civil War ended, the South simply kept their guns and horses and returned to the farm or the plantation. But that was not the end to it. In 1867, the Federal Government, mindful that the former slaves in the South might feel retribution, and because of the poverty and destruction to Southern society from the war, established five separate military districts that governed many of the former Confederate states.

The Military Reconstruction Act divided the South into five military districts. Virginia became the first district, North Carolina and South Carolina the second district, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida the third district, Mississippi and Arkansas the fourth district, and Louisiana and Texas the fifth district. These territories were placed under the military control of the United States. The first military commanders had virtually unlimited power. The Military Reconstruction Act also required the southern states to elect new government officials.

There is no question that among the Radical Republicans of the immediate post-Civil War era, the intention of reforming governments in the South had a definite punitive aspect. The other objective was to establish governments more closely resembling those in the north where the new Reconstruction Amendments could be enforced.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment abolished slavery. The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment elaborated on the privileges of free men, having the same rights as all people in other states and having a right to the details of trial by jury, and having equal protection under the law (which became a tragic joke.) Finally, the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment said that former slaves shall have the right to vote in exactly the same way as anyone else. (Except women, who could not vote until 1920.)

The Radical Republicans, those who had been abolitionists before the war and those who felt that the Confederacy was made up of traitors and needed to be brought back into a more democratic union with new rules...that group gained power in the elections of 1866 and they set up Republican governments in the South. These were bi-racial governments, often with elected officials from the North both Black and White. Many in the South resented and rebelled against it, making ex-slaves the particular target of their violent activity.

The states within the military districts began to return to the Black Codes. The Black Codes which had been around since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were designed to control the free black population, restricting their movement, forbidding them from bearing arms, becoming literate, speaking freely or testifying in court against Whites.

Several Supreme Court decisions moving power over voting and local law enforcement and prosecution to individual states began to erode the power of the Republican governments in the South. Meanwhile, the KKK under a variety of names continued to terrorize Blacks in the South, setting fire to homes and taking individual blacks from their homes in the dead of night to be hanged.

Slavery obviously was not new when it began in the South. On the contrary, slavery, practiced since the earliest days of organized groups, was in its waning phase. For many centuries before the Atlantic Slave Trade, Arab traders had brought African slaves out of Western Africa and across the Red Sea or by caravan into Egypt and beyond to be sold in markets all over the Middle East and as far as Asia.

Now the transatlantic trade would bring about 12 million Africans to various locations in the Americas during settlement of North and South America. Of those, about 37% went to Brazil. The U.S. imported about 600,000 African slaves, which grew to a population of about 4 million in the United States by 1860.

One of the myths that surrounds slavery is that of paternalism Was there a friendly master-servant relationship between slave-owners and slaves? There seems to be very little evidence that this happened with any regularity at all. In general, slaves were not treated kindly. In almost every documented narrative

by an ex-slave there are stories of beatings, whippings, rape, restriction of food, physical restraints and even amputations.

Contemporary accounts from slaves interviewed or having written memoirs up to about 1930, indicate that the overwhelming memory is of subjugation. There are almost no accounts of a close relationship or generous spirit on the part of slave owners. The idea of a South abundantly populated with kinder, gentler masters than one would imagine is a fantasy supported by the sanitized versions of daily activities passed on by the plantation owners themselves.

While there may have been isolated incidents of affection and loyalty, this was not normally the case. In the end, it was slavery. Slaves were obliged to work long, hard hours in extreme conditions. Accounts from interviewed ex-slaves tell primarily of abuse and neglect. Families were often separated, and sold like farm animals to other owners in other states. Slavery was the kind of behavior that today is literally criminal activity for its inhumanity.

The only compassionate, witty and sophisticated pirates or slave owners are Hollywood pirates and slave owners. Slaveholders were ruthless men who cruelly beat, starved and occasionally worked people to death. They meted out exceptionally harsh punishments and they not only used violence to sustain their dominant position but also to intimidate and terrorize those whom they did not have under their control.

Having said that, the actual number of White Southerners owning slaves was less than 25 percent. Only one percent of White Southerners owned more than one hundred slaves. So, a plantation owner with 100 slaves could have an investment of about \$80,000 which in today's terms would be something in the millions. Eighty percent of slaves worked in the fields picking cotton. The balance worked in the fields on tobacco and other crops or worked in other functions either on a plantation or in a community.

When you look at the ante-bellum makeup of the Southern economy, it is pretty clear that the Civil War was not about states' rights but about slavery. It was about the right of certain wealthy individuals within slave states to own and keep captive other men and women. It was not about the civilizing, conversion to

Christianity and agricultural training of simple, contented Africans living in a pastoral setting. Slaves are not content and American slaves proved that with numerous rebellions throughout the South.

Between 1700 and the end of the Civil War, there were approximately 250 rebellions in the South, including ones by Nat Turner where over 60 whites and eventually hundreds of slaves were killed. There were other noted rebellions including ones by Gabriel Prosser in Virginia in 1800 and by Denmark Vesey in Charleston in 1822. They were all violently put down with terrible retribution. None succeeded. The eventual action needed to free slaves came about with the South finally overstepping its bounds and seceding from the nation. Only an inevitable Civil War could--and did--free the slaves.

We continue to see parallels between the Old South and the New South. The current leaders of the old Dixiecrat Party, the Segregationists, the ones who wanted to continue the old Jim Crow laws are the current members of the Republican Party and their Right Wing members, the Republican Tea Party. This can be proved very simply.

In 1948, Harry Truman said that Civil Rights would be a part of the Democratic platform, after he had integrated the military. Strom Thurmond and the Segregationists, the so-called Dixiecrats, walked out of the convention. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson said that it was time to end Segregation, totally eliminate the old Jim Crow laws and move to a more forceful enforcement of all Civil Rights, including equal opportunity for jobs, education and daily life, such as abandoning the segregation of public facilities.

When, in the 1964 elections, the only states to vote for Barry Goldwater except for his home state, Arizona, were the four in the deep South, it became clear to Nixon's campaign committee for 1968, that the way to win the South was to appeal to the racists. And that is what Nixon's campaign did. The Southern states suddenly became swing states, giving Republicans just enough of the edge they needed to win.

In the Reagan elections and in the first Bush election, race and the appeals to former Segregationist Republicans became more sophisticated, with Lee Atwater devising code words that replaced the old and

often embarrassing language used to appeal for votes to the real bigots. And today, the racism is often open and out in the public, with the old Revolutionary-style cartoonish African Tribal imagery on signs about the President. Racism is back and with the advent of the anonymous Internet, any racist bigot can post a web site to show his or her stupidity for all to see.

Racism as a political tool has not abated with the advent of an African-American President. Just as the Southern plantation owners wanted it all--money and power, today the Corporate CEOs and the stock-ownership class, the Billionaires, want to control society. They, like the old plantation owners want to control the labor force and bring near-slave wages to the American worker. And whom have they found to handle the legislation necessary to create this return to an Ante Bellum Society? The answer is obvious. The Southern Republicans.

The positions held by those corresponding to the old plantation owners are now held by the Right Wing Billionaires, people like the Koch Brothers, the owners of EXXON, and the CEOs of the health insurance companies. Of course, African-Americans are no longer slaves. But they may as well be. Here's why.

In the U.S. today, these billionaires and their hired corporate managers, the richest one percent of households, owns 37% of all wealth. In addition to 37% of all wealth, the top 1% of Americans own two-thirds of all stock in all corporations. By purchasing politicians through political contributions made virtually unlimited by the Supreme Court "Citizens United" decision, business legislation and tax legislation continue to increase this percentage of earning.

The result is an gigantic gap between the net worth of the rich and the poor. And who are the poor? The poorer you are the more likely it is that your skin will be black. For example, in 2009, a representative survey of American households indicated that the median net worth of the White family was \$113,149 versus an almost unbelievable low of \$5,677 for African-American families.

In 2010, household income for White families in 2010 was \$54,620. For Black families, it was \$32,068 and falling. We talk about unemployment but it is much worse than the numbers indicate. Unemployment

is now 7.4% for whites and 12.6% for Blacks. But we know that is not the whole story. For example, the number of African-Americans who are unemployed for more than 99 weeks is twice that of Whites.

The story has not changed for African-Americans. They are always the last hired and the first let go. Our legislation has institutionalized their lack of competitive job training, education, and experience.

To astute political observers, words like “the poor” used by the Billionaire-pandering Republican House and Senate members have a clear connotation. They mean “Black” or “African-American.” Just as the Tea Party members will shut down government to pretend that they have some fiscal conscience, the Southern Republicans will shut down anti-poverty programs for Whites simply to shut them down against Blacks. For example, they have voted to cut back food stamps for those without jobs and who cannot find jobs in a society which now has 5 applicants for every job opening.

But this is nothing new. While the country did free the Imported Americans after the Civil War, they were never given the equal treatment that they expected under the 14th Amendment. In the South, “states rights” meant that state governments, according to a ruling by the Supreme Court, had the right to set certain rules, like those for voting laws.

The Jim Crow laws could prevent blacks from voting, from attending White schools, from attending state universities, and from drinking or eating with white people. It was not until 1954 that these rules were struck down and until states were told by the Supreme Court that they must follow federal law when it superseded state law.

When legal methods went against the South, from the very beginning, 1866, organizations like the Red Shirts and the White League and the Klu Klux Klan took matters into their own hands. The Civil War devastated the South financially, its infrastructure totally destroyed. But there were plenty of men with guns and military training and time on their hands.

By 1866, bands of armed ex-Confederate soldiers already roamed the south, killing blacks and some members of the Republican Party, who had been sent south to set up Republican governments, to assure fair treatment of the ex-slaves, the Freedmen. Republicans who had won the post-war elections, took over the South by force, with union troops that were stationed in the South until 1876.

The anecdotal reporting of killings and hangings and shootings, and massacres large and small of African-Americans in the South in the years after the war is astonishing. There were some more prominent and less deniable incidents such as the murders of several hundred freedmen in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, and the recorded murders of over 1,000 freedmen in only six months of 1868 in Louisiana. But the daily intimidations, beatings, and occasional late-night cross-burnings and even whipping of innocent men is beyond our understanding.

The Colfax Massacre in Louisiana was one such serious occasion. On Easter Sunday, April 13, 1872 a band of White Democratic where a white Democratic militia murdered over 100 Black Freedmen who were Republican elected officials. With rifles and a cannon, White Democratic representatives overwhelmed the Grant Parish courthouse and took over 50 black Freedmen prisoner whom they later murdered. It is known that perhaps more than 150 Freedmen in all were killed.

This incident is not to be confused with the New Orleans Massacre of 1866, where 34 Freedmen were killed and more than 40 wounded. Nor should it be confused with any of the other 1081 political murders of Freedmen that took place at various times leading up to the elections of 1868.

From 1870 through 1876, African-Americans could vote and could hold office. During that period, there were only 2 African-American Senators and 15 African-American Congressmen sent to Washington. Hardly a tidal wave of Freedmen. The Compromise of 1876 sent all Union troops protecting freedmen back North. That virtually ended elections of Freedmen to national office for 100 years.

There were more freedmen in state legislatures, but that was because they had not yet been legislated out of voting and because there were still communities where freedmen were the sole ethnic group or where they made up the overwhelming majority.

After Reconstruction and the devastation of the South, share cropping bound people to the land and existence was bitter and poor. The animosity between poor Blacks and poor Whites intensified and the laws became more and more restrictive on Blacks.

The period of what the South called “Redemption,” began after Reconstruction, when Southern White Democrats reclaimed local government from the Republicans, many of whom had come from the North and others who were southern Republicans. The Klu Klux Klan continued, but it became less regularly active as state legislatures simply wrote Blacks out of the equation.

African-Americans were obliged to pay polling taxes, which they did not have and pass literacy tests which they could not because they not only had no schools but it was illegal for them to go to school in most areas. By 1903 in Alabama, of 181,000 African-Americans only 2,980 could register, even though there were an identified 74,000 African-Americans who, for a variety of reasons could be proven literate.

Blacks were free but still indentured. Laws concerning vagrancy and making it illegal to be jobless in many Southern states meant that Blacks had to keep their jobs. Keeping their jobs often meant going into debt to business owners, from which they effectively never broke free, or working for whatever wages were offered.

The turn of the century saw the African American as largely uneducated, landless sharecroppers. While the second half of the 20th Century would see major improvements in voting rights, job opportunities, social services and particularly in higher education, the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was not much different from the latter part of the 19th Century.

African-Americans, still subject to degrading Jim Crow laws, began to migrate North. In 1900, over 90% of all African-Americans still lived in the South. By 1930, one-third had moved North and West. By 1990, only half of all Southern Blacks still lived in the South.

Black migration to the North, both because it was new and because there were fewer Blacks in neighborhoods, went relatively smoothly, or at least without much disturbance, until the Depression. At that point, with one of every four workers out of a job, and the fact that African-Americans had to accept only about 40% of White salaries, tensions arose, leading to conflicts over employment and housing. Consequently, the North proved less welcoming than we like to imagine.

There were virtually no Blacks in executive positions, few in supervisory positions and, for some time, none in the major labor unions. They were deliberately excluded. In 1939, the average African-American who was employed at all made only about \$530 annually compared to the White employee's \$1270.

When African-Americans moved North, much the same as other immigrants, they clustered together in their own neighborhoods like New York City's Harlem, Boston's Roxbury, Detroit's East Side Black Bottom and Chicago's South Side Bronzville neighborhoods.

By the late 1940s Blacks began more frequently challenge some of the old "Jim Crow" laws. Tensions grew in the South. The NAACP and ACLU and some religious groups became involved. In 1964 and 1965, in the era of sympathetic feelings after the death of President Kennedy, Lydon Johnson was able to push through civil rights and voting rights legislation that would substantially strengthen anti-discrimination laws.

The Black community finally began to gain some political power. But it was short-lived.

End of Part I

The Imported Americans Part II

The movement towards civil rights and a color-blind society ended when Ronald Reagan took office in 1981. After only 15 years, the affirmative actions that Americans took to right the wrongs of 300 years were over.

Whether or not he was personally a racist, the fact is that his actions told Southern Segregationists that the Republican Party was shifting not only to Conservative economic values, but to the far Right both socially, politically and racially.

Soon former Dixiecrat politicians like Strom Thurmond, Trent Lott and Jesse Helms played prominent roles in the decisions of the Republican Party. After generations, ex-Klansmen once again held political influence with the White House. The racist mantra involved the words, “the poor.” Since everyone knew that the large body of African-American society was poor, and because the Republicans cared no more for the White poor than the Black poor, they used the terms interchangeably. .

No matter what Ronald Reagan said, his record is clear. He not only opposed Medicare in 1964, but spoke on television and around the country against it, calling it the first step towards Socialism. He opposed the Civil Rights act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. He said that the Constitution prohibited these laws.

Someone’s rights were going to be violated. Reagan was basically saying that it should be the individual person, whose skin happened to be black. In supporting the old Jim Crow laws against the new Civil Rights legislation, Reagan said the he merely felt that it should not be the business or property owners whose rights to prevent blacks from entering or using the facilities would be violated. There is no other way to read the law and Reagan’s opinion.

After Reagan opened the door and with his charismatic presentation of the rationale for bigotry, the Republican Party felt the way was clear to expand on racism as a political tool. They hired unscrupulous political hacks like Lee Atwater and Karl Rove to divide the South and appeal to Northern Whites who felt that Blacks had come too far, too fast.

Lee Atwater was the campaign manager for Ronald Reagan's reelection campaign, and then the Chairman of the Republican Party. He spoke for all Republicans. In an interview, he said the following that made the Republican position quite indelibly clear:

“By 1968 you can't say ‘nigger’—that hurts you, backfires. So you say stuff like, uh, ‘forced busing,’ ‘states rights’ and all that stuff, and you're getting so abstract. Now, you're talking about cutting taxes, and all these things you're talking about are totally economic things and a byproduct of them is, blacks get hurt worse than whites....”

So the ads were all about how Willie Horton, whose black face was shown in campaign ads got out of jail and murdered someone. It was irrelevant, but it moved the racism forward. The campaigns were about the poor and how they are “lazy,” and the poor are...what? Mostly Black.

The Imported Americans, abused and beaten and enslaved. When one man by the name of Johnson from the Deep South...from the dark heart of bigotry, Texas, gives them a leg up, Atwater and Bush Sr. and Reagan are there to knock them down again.

Hatred beyond imagining, hatred beyond belief—stretching over generations--and racial hatred so intense that it can outlast and overcome the wishes of an entire nation. Lies and misdemeanors, lies and felonies, lies and the murder of the conscience of a country. This is what Lee Atwater apologized for before he died of a brain tumor, undoubtedly not certain of what would happen to his soul.

Desperate for some redemption, Lee Atwater at the certain end of his life converted to Catholicism. The question is: what kind of penance is due for trying to return a whole class of people to penury, and with poverty, depression and with depression...death? What penance is due for the death of hope and the decision to take food from the poor and education from a child? What kind of penalty should a Deity ask for encouraging hatred of an entire people?

How many years in Purgatory for these kinds of crimes? Lee Atwater was scared shitless of dying as he should have been.

So this is how they did it. This is how the Republicans denigrated Blacks while winning elections. It is what Hitler did to the Jews, but we must...as Atwater said...be more discreet in the current media era. Only the hicks, those who are or have latent tendencies to be racists, especially in the South where it is right there, palpable, just under the surface—only they will pick it up right away, pick up the old symbols and—know positively—what the commercials and speeches mean.

Blacks know, too. They are used to it. They understood the appeal to just enough lower-class, uneducated White voters to win elections. It takes very little to stir up the old animosities. Winning the South as a bloc led to a changed balance of power. Now, the South was solid Republican. And so the Republican Party could begin to work on other lies.

The biggest lie, The Big Lie, was Reaganomics...the idea that you can cut taxes lower than the amount needed to run government but the amounts you cut will somehow be paid back by an expanding economy. If people have more of their own money to spend, it will increase the economy and increased tax revenues will result. Enough to pay back the tax cuts.

It was a fantasy. The national debt tripled in Reagan's terms alone, then almost doubled again in only four years of Bush the First. Reagan's economic argument was this: It is your money. You know how to spend it better than the government does. You will have more to spend, the economy will grow. The economy grew. But only because the population grew. Under Reagan, unemployment averaged 7.5% for his whole term. In the subsequent Clinton era, we needed almost zero unemployment, increased taxes, a lot of budget efficiencies and a booming economy for the longest period of our history just to get the budget back in balance.

Yet Clinton was able to create, after a few years, a period of growth that averaged over 4%...after inflation...and a balanced budget. After the Recession of 1991-92 that he inherited from Bush the First. American family incomes grew by 14%, and African-American household incomes grew by one-third.

And the budget would have stayed in balance except that we elected a moron, a crony Capitalist and a war criminal to the White House in 2000. Two more tax cuts, two recessions and a Depression, two wars and a giant hundred-billion-dollar giveaway to the pharmaceutical companies and we now owe \$17 trillion.

The cynicism, the utter disregard for human life that Lee Atwater embodied, still exists in the Republican Party. In fact, it has worsened. A billionaire-funded organization called the Tea Party Republicans will not allow no one to be nominated, in the South, or in any state unless he or she has fully demonstrated in some action, some verbiage, that he or she knows the "code."

People like Congressman Louie Gohmert of Texas is typical. He rants on and on about the sloth of the unemployed, How they are so "lazy," the code word since before 1865, first to describe slaves, later to describe Freedmen, who had no job nor skill nor education.

The culmination of all this barren intellectual effort was evident in 2008, when Republicans nominated an over-the-hill, genial but weak-minded candidate, Senator John McCain, (he finished almost dead last in his class at Annapolis) a war hero when the Vietnamese shot down his plane, who took on as the Vice Presidential candidate, what turned out to be little more than an ignorant, fluffy, little attention-seeking housewife-turned politician from Alaska.

Sarah Palin quickly displayed her total ignorance of all things governmental. She became such a national joke, so ridiculed by Democrats that she became the darling of that small core of unenlightened. Religious fundamentalist, anti-science, pro-carbon and deeply racist group in the Right Wing of the GOP. She resigned the governorship of Alaska after only two years and went on to make \$25 million her first year working for the billionaires, the giant corporations, the Southern racists and Fox News.

Billionaires who own media companies and publishing companies will sell your books and put you on television but they want something in return. The Republican Party will support you as long as you attract the hicks and deliver the right message. And Sarah Palin is nothing if not a “media whore” as we now call people who seek constant attention on television, like Ann Coulter or Bill O’Reilly.

A little bit of racism, delivered now and then on the Fox News Channel is enough to pay back the debt.. Talking about the Snowden affair, Palin commented (where the Roger Ailes-written script indicated) that the President was leading from behind, that he was “lackadaisical” and acting as one would expect of a “community organizer.”

The word “lackadaisical” can easily be traced back to its use in old racist books and articles about slave and freedmen work habits. It is one of the easy code words to find. “Community organizer” is something new, a new racist implication. It must have been from one of the new, copywriters out of Hillsdale College or Liberty University. The idea of course is that someone like Barack Obama could only be qualified for a low-paid, low responsibility job in a “poor” (yes, meaning Black) neighborhood where people needed to be “organized” out of their lackadaisical habits.

So here we have the descendants of the slave traders and plantation owners, who imported slaves, beat and whipped and separated slaves from their families, sold slaves and kept them from any education under pain of violent reprisal. They are now the new South, post Reagan. The ownership society in the new Confederate south hasn’t had its fill of hatred for those that their ancestors imported from Africa, beat, enslaved and murdered.

Shouldn't the Imported Americans be the ones to violently hate their White fellow citizens, and shouldn't they be the ones underprivileged, discriminated against, thrown into virtual ghettos and treated with gross negligence to hate all White Americans with a hard, gemlike flame?

The new Tea Party and Neocon and Right Wing racists are as far from the traditions of the Old Radical Republicans like Lincoln and Grant and Teddy Roosevelt and Taft and Eisenhower as a professional

wrestler is from a concert pianist. The only African-Americans they know are the ones who have some axe to grind for the Right Wing. There are some “Uncle Toms” around.

That is you must discriminate between someone who is black and has one set of values and someone who is black but totally different values. For example, the Republicans encouraged and many voted for a Republican Presidential Primary candidate named Herman Cain. Herman Cain must have some managerial skills. He was the President of a moderately sized but ostensibly successful pizza company. Herman Cain was quickly undressed by the media and other GOP candidates and shown to be a popular, genial and relatively intelligent man who knows next-to-nothing about politics or government. Cain took a traditional approach, earning his college degree at Morehouse, one of the original black universities, then a master’s degree at Purdue. He spent most of his career with major corporations in the food business, including Pillsbury where he was president of Godfathers pizza for ten years.

Van Jones took a different course. Raised in Tennessee, he was a lifelong Liberal and devotee of the Kennedy political legacy. He earned his degree at the University of Tennessee, Martin. He then became an advocate for free expression of ideas, developing media on college campuses and alternative media. He then went on to get his law degree from Yale. He became a legal advocate against police violence, against unequal jail sentences for black juveniles and for green issues.

Jones founded numerous NGOs involved with equality of opportunity and environmental issues. He was appointed in 2009 by President Obama to a special White House position on the creation of green jobs. Each man, Cain and Jones, applied his intelligence and effort to worthy causes. But each ended up on differing sides of the political spectrum. Their Skin color was irrelevant to their goals and achievements.

Some African-Americans, very few, have decided that a good way to get rich is to swallow their pride and join the Republican Party. It does seem strange to find African-Americans in a political party in which the underlying connection is that everyone in the Party has a disdain for and works against any legislation that would remotely help anyone who is Black.

Today, the rich oil men and the rich mining corporations and the very profitable pharmaceutical companies and the wildly profitable health insurance industry have literally purchased the legislators from the old Confederate states, the Deep South and the Old South. Purchased their support the way the great-grandfathers of the Southern Senators and Congressmen imported slaves and sold them in slave marketplaces...like cattle.

Republican legislators will tell you that things have never been better for those who have a good education and work hard. While it is true that people with a college education are now unemployed at a rate lower than full employment measurement rates, there are still about 9 to 10 million people unemployed as of August 2011. American unemployment is at 7.9%. Imported American—African-American unemployment is at 15.7%. There are about 28 million African-Americans in the U.S. population today and only about 15 million can find jobs.

African-Americans are lagging behind Whites in significant numbers in education, income, home ownership and employment. And they are not catching up, with average earnings only about two-thirds as much as Whites. Even with our foreclosure problems, about 1 out of 2 White Americans owns his own home. For African Americans it is 1 out of 5. Statistics don't begin to tell the story of multi-generational poverty and ignorance and racism. You can be White and poor and still have a certain feeling of dignity. You can be Black and wealthy...or a President...and, as we have seen, can still experience insult and ridicule.

In the 1960s, we thought we had this racism thing whipped. The centuries-long disadvantages, to put it mildly, attached to being born Black had been recognized by a society mobilized for justice and equality after the death of President Kennedy. Our social awareness turned to social activism and Lyndon Johnson was just the kind of powerful legislator to get it done. By the mid-1960s legislation had been passed that gave African-Americans some small advantages in education and equality of opportunity in the search for a job.

The problem is that it was short lived. When Reagan was elected, his foreshadowing as a Right Winger, the speech against affirmative action in the very place in Mississippi where three Civil Rights workers were murdered turned out to be the way he would govern. After 375 years on this continent, 245 of which had been in slavery, 100 of which had been under Jim Crow, Ronald Reagan felt that 30 years of equal opportunity and affirmative action was enough to make thing right.

Was Reagan a racist? Lee Atwater was his campaign manager and later, while he was undisputed head of the Party, the Chairman of the Republican Party. He supported Strom Thurmond and Jesse Helms, two of the biggest racists in U.S. history. He tried to have restrictions lifted on Bob Jones University for discriminatory policies against Blacks.

He lifted the affirmative action regulations that had enabled more Blacks to get government contracts. He reduced the number of Civil Right enforcement personnel at the Justice Department. He reduced federal aid to school lunches, (and defined ketchup as a vegetable) which at the time for some poor, mostly Black, children was their only hot mean of the day. (Remember, unemployment averaged...averaged...5% during Reagan's Presidency...and Black net worth declined.)

And what was the outcome? How did Reagan's making Blacks more responsible for their own actions, more self-reliant work out in practice? Because that is the only reason to do such things....unless you are a racist. They didn't turn out so well.

Of the roughly 38 million Americans whom we call "poor" about half are White. About 9 million or 25% are Black. But the 17 million poor who are White make up about 10% of the White population. The 9 million who are Black not only make up 25% of the poor but they make up 25% of all Blacks. In other words one out of ten Whites is poor and one out of four Blacks is poor.

But it is much worse than even those numbers would indicate. The average White child attends an elementary school that is 78% White and only 30% of students could be classified as poor.. Statistically that means more property taxes, better buildings, facilities and teachers. It is just the way it is. Property

taxes pay for schools. But Black students attend schools that are over half minority and two-thirds of students are from homes classified as under the poverty line.

The high schools where kids go to college are made up mostly of White kids (about 75%) and only about 11% of Black kids. As far as graduation rates go, Whites only graduate at about 75% of all attendees, but Blacks are lower, at about 50%. What are we doing with our society? If you want to ignore equality and fairness...you could still make the argument that, with 50% dropout rates for Blacks...we are perpetuating a welfare society.

So the question becomes this: do we want to keep Blacks from competing with Whites by maintaining a status quo in which they live in isolation, with poor schools, poor neighborhood infrastructure and wholesale poverty? Do we want to lead people into permanent poverty which leads to permanent crime which leads to imprisonment which leads us back to slavery? Are we simply collaborators with those who would enslave a whole race of people? Because that is what we are doing.

Today, the old Confederate idea of diverting attention of a real blight on society...enslaving other men for your own enrichment... by claiming the issue is really "states rights"...has returned. Today's diversion is whether states and communities have the right to void affirmative action programs. Today's diversion is to create the illusion of voter fraud to prohibit Black Americans from voting. The biggest fraud perpetrated on the American People these days is the idea that there is fraud. There is no voter fraud. That is a completely fabricated issue. There is less than a fraction of a percent of voter fraud anywhere in the country.

So how can our elected officials create laws that pretend that there is voter fraud and then try to strike it down with more restrictive voting procedures? It is done because our state legislatures have been co-opted by an organization called ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council. ALEC is an alignment of forces who pander to racists in the South and in places like Oklahoma and Kansas and

Missouri and Kentucky and West Virginia, where there are pockets of poor White bigotry that lie just under the surface and can be resurrected easily.

For those who don't know, ALEC is an organization that was for many years secretly buying up the allegiance of state legislators. It is an organization composed of corporations that are or were instrumental in buying legislators, such as: Coca-Cola Corporation, Kraft Foods, MacDonald's, Intuit (computerized tax preparation), Procter and Gamble, Wendy's WalMart, Johnson and Johnson, John Deere, Dell Computers, Hewlett-Packard, Coors, Best Buy, General Motors, General Electric, the Dreyfus Fund, Western Union, Sprint, Bank of America, Merck, Unilever, Bristol Meyers Squibb, Publix Supermarkets, and the list goes on and on.

Everyone you thought cared about you is buying your legislators by sending them on luxury vacations to Palm Springs and high-end resorts while literally handing them laws to submit to stop anti-pollution measures, correct invisible voter fraud, putting guns in schools, training cops to be a private enforcement team to stop strikes or put down public demonstrations.

Remember the old quote from Martin Niemoller about the Nazis? Niemoller was a prominent protestant pastor in Germany during the Nazi era. He is most famous for this quote:

*“First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out--*

*Because I was not a Socialist.*

*Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out--*

*Because I was not a Trade Unionist.*

*Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out--*

*Because I was not a Jew.*

*Then they came for me--and there was no one left to speak for me.*

Now they are coming for the Blacks and you had better speak up for them. You had better join them. You had better march for them, shout for their welfare, for their education, for a living wage to sustain them until we can make up for 375 years of oppressing and hating them.

You may think that you are safe. But Fascists...and make no mistake...these people are the new Fascists, Neo-Fascists, with their new Atwater and Rove techniques...and they will come for you next if you are not a target already.

The legislators working for ALEC, which, by the way, includes the governor of Wisconsin and a prominent Republican, Kirk Dillard, running for governor of Illinois, will tell you that the poor (Blacks) are lazy and shiftless. But, beware. We now have 38 million people who have become poor, and thanks to these people, millions more become poor every year. They are coming for you.

Yes, of course Blacks are lazy and shiftless. Let's see who they are. They are men who work for the city, taking the bus to work at 5 a.m. to assemble in crews to sweep the streets. They are men's room attendants who work from 5 p.m. until 2 a.m and then take the last bus home. They are dishwashers and garbage collectors and the men who mop the floors and clean the toilets. Does that sound lazy to you?

It sounds oppressive. A good job for an African-American is a government job, or an assembly line job, or a job carrying the mail in all kinds of weather. For the most part...don't use Colin Powell as an example, nor Barack Obama either...for the most part African-Americans work in less than middle class jobs, make less than middle class wages and are not given the tools to climb out of lower class status.

American Apartheid is not over. But groups like ALEC and the Right Wing of the Republican Party would like you to think that it is. African-American persecution is on the rise. The only difference today is that now—unlike previous generations—because of instant communications—they must really include the poor this time. That is not good news for African-Americans. More poor does not make you wealthier. If you are at the bottom rung of the ladder, it makes no difference how high or how low it goes.

This time, we have a group of Right Wingers, Neoconservatives, calling themselves Republicans. But they are not Republicans at all in the traditional sense. They are hyper conservatives, trolling for table scraps from the billionaire corporation owners, that rarified air, where the only smell is that of money. They bow down, on their knees before the international corporations and their lobbyists.

The Right Wing has spawned an even further Right group. The Tea Party was a bunch of cranks and misfits who came out in 2009 against more taxes. Of course, President Obama did not raise taxes on these people, or actually anyone as it turned out. But these radical non-thinkers, who argued against health care under government control (which was never even considered by Congress) carried signs that read: “Hands Off My Medicare” (a government run system).

Developed into large assemblies by organizers at FreedomWorks and Americans for Prosperity, Koch Family funded racist organizations, the Tea Party members also carried racist signs and insulting racist cartoon images of the President in their demonstrations. These overt images by the somewhat cloddish, elderly stooges were soon replaced by more sophisticated presentations with busloads of people being brought into Koch Brothers organized rallies in Washington.

And what were these rallies against? Well, if you were a billionaire and hated giving large sums to the government you would organize morons to demonstrate against—taxes! While paying less than 20% of their income to the government, the billionaires saw taxes as an issue that the clods could be induced to rail against. Meanwhile, for lack of revenue, the very roads and bridges they traveled on crumbled beneath them on their way to demonstrate.

And how do these organizations survive? Is it the pure hatred of taxes or the prospect of a Medicare-like system replacing private health care premiums of \$15,000 per year or more (if you can even get health insurance?) No. It is the debilitating American weakness, the subliminal idea that if we help society, we are helping African-Americans, whom the Right Wing—a racist organization for its own economic reasons—have successfully portrayed as lazy, shiftless, or “lackadaisical” if you prefer.

Do you really think that Blacks don't want to work? Would you risk your life for a job, for a good income? Black Americans, who now make up ever larger segments of the military and police forces, also make up a large percentage of drug dealers...real drug dealers, not penny ante marijuana peddlers.

These people don't take drugs. They sell drugs--heroin and cocaine. It is a dangerous business. They die at much earlier ages and in much greater numbers than even the average Black man, who has a much shorter life span than a White American male. They don't do it to deliberately hurt other African-Americans. They do it for the money.

African-Americans play sports with a view to making a living at it. Why? Because experience tells them that they will not be able to compete in the educated and skilled jobs because the system, as it is now, does not show them that it works. To become a professional athlete is not like becoming a good amateur athlete. It takes dedication and sacrifice. Even with the greatest dedication, only a few make it to professional status.

Why can't we change a system that rewards athletic prowess but requires at least minimum academic achievement? Would it not be better to have 600 college graduates who could return to their old neighborhoods and build them up than to have one superstar who would build a civic center and basketball court...or even a medical clinic? We need educated Black men to raise the average income of African-Americans. We do not need one superstar whose \$30 million a year contract raises the median income beyond anything representative of the truth.

We must consider what constitutes wealth for the average family and the average family is not one that has a major league baseball player as the breadwinner. Wealth in most families means a good income, home ownership with enough equity not to be in danger of losing it, a good education, and inherited or family wealth, something to fall back on in bad times. Very little of that is present in African-American society.

But it is not personal characteristics that have caused a tripling of the wealth gap between Black and White families over the past 25 years. That increasing gap has come from government policies and from deeply entrenched social habits. For example, the economic policies of the Bush Administration led to a real estate crash that caused, thus far, foreclosure on 10.9 million homes. While there were more White families foreclosed than Blacks, as one would expect, the rate of foreclosure for Blacks was twice that of White families.

During the period of 2007-2009, studies showed that while White families lost an average of 12% of their net worth, Black families lost almost half of their entire net worth. This was because much of it was in newly acquired real estate, purchased at high prices, with expensive mortgages, as African-Americans, as White Americans have in past eras, tried to gain an economic foothold through that most common of investments, the residential home.

Foreclosures have an impact on more than individual wealth. We have seen that in Black communities around the country foreclosures have been disastrous for entire neighborhoods. Across the country, over \$1 trillion in property losses have been experienced in African-American communities alone. We all know the story of Detroit, how property losses and subsequent lack of property tax revenue actually forced the city into bankruptcy.

So the facts are pretty clear. The Imported Americans never recovered from slavery. They made no gains during Reconstruction. And in the years since the initiation of Civil Rights legislation, only the 1960s and 1970s, and the Clinton years were years of advancement. Those advances were wiped out in the Bush years.

The Republicans of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century who fought for abolition of slavery, who died for it in the Civil War, no longer exist. They have absorbed the old Dixiecrat Party and now have a new Tea Party wing, which is even more anti-government and more racist.

Today's "Republican Party" the Neocons, are merely a subservient organization to the giant global corporations who were founded here, but now in many cases are headquartered off shore. These large international corporations have paid off the Republicans to cut government regulations, reduce corporate taxes, eliminate rules on safety and pollution, give no-bid contracts to military contractors and promise to cut Social Security, privatize Medicare and reduce wages to less than \$8.00 an hour. The evidence is quite clear. One need only visit the web site, [ALECEXPOSED.org](http://ALECEXPOSED.org).

Here's where everything converges. The same kinds of people as those who imported and sold or owned slaves are still around. It is no longer legal to own slaves, but they are trying to do the next best thing for their own self-interest—create slave labor conditions.

We now have some ability to survive, so, instead of 1 of 4 out of work as in the Depression, today only 9 people out of a hundred are out of work—but 15 African-Americans out of a hundred are out of work. One of the questions we need to ask ourselves is why would those 15 out of a hundred who are out of work be any different from the 85 who are employed? There is proof that we have created an economy that has only one job for every 5 individuals who apply. But where is the evidence that the 15 Blacks out of a hundred who can't get that job are lazy? There is none.

The racism is still there. Mississippi wants to honor a Klu Klux Klan member on a state license plate. The Carolinas fly Confederate flags over their state capitols. They insult the President of the United States and encourage all Americans to arm themselves, even to carry weapons into college classrooms, churches and elementary schools. These people we used to call "nuts" or "fruitcakes." They're back.

They have found friends among the very rich. Just as they would sell human beings for a price, now they will sell the truth...tell a lie...for a price. And the rich overpay. They had no idea how little these little people would have taken merely to have the right to lie on television or radio...the celebrity itself might have been enough. Rush Limbaugh's and Glenn Beck's single most dominant feature prior to selling out

to the rich was their consistent and pervading failure at everything. Each one's most dominant identifying characteristic was failure.

Now they have found a certain notoriety and wealth by lying about health care. The legislators they promote are those who are bribed to vote against health care. They are told what to say about taxes and they say repeat it endlessly. They support the health insurance industry which is raping the citizens of the United States.

The Right Wing Republican party organization works tirelessly behind the scenes to create contracts for the favored Republican lobbyists on K Street who pay them the bribes. And they act in 2013 with the same stone-cold attitude of the slave traders. Neocons are trading in the slave business philosophy...the idea that you can take all the money in the Treasury and give it to the rich in tax rebates and then you can cut the salaries of Federal and State employees in order to pay for it.

And the Imported Americans continue to fall behind. They drop out of school at twice the rate of Whites. One out of four Black men who drop out of high school will end up in jail before they are 24 years old. They never get an education and never find a meaningful job. And so they repeat the cycle, fathering children out of wedlock because they have no career, no permanent job, no way to afford a wife and children in what Whites would call a normal setting.

In 2009, the Neo-Fascists in the Republican Party took over \$400 million in campaign contributions, in that one year alone, from the health care industry to vote against the health care reform bill. It was not merely the pandering to the corporations. The Republicans have been doing that for a long time. The idea was to break the back of health care reform that would remove one more way that corporations and Southern states have to hold down African-Americans. If you have no health care, or if it costs you an inordinate percentage of your meager salary, then you have control.

And who led the charge against health care reform? The South. The Southern Republicans fought it hard and long. It passed the Senate and then passed in the House by only two votes. Nothing that makes Blacks

stronger physically or financially is good for the Southern Wing of the Republican Party, or so they think.

The Neo-Fascists took the side of the hugely profitable health insurance industry against the needs of the People. That was specific but it was also symbolic. They were saying to those Southern supporters...we are doing this to put down the “freeloaders” the Blacks whom they want to subjugate. It isn’t necessary to see a Confederate flag flying on every Congressman’s limousine to know that their constituency—the rich and the bigots—want the poor to remain poor...low wages, few benefits...beholden to the “company store.”

Now the Republicans want to repeal health care. They have voted in the House of Representatives 38 times to repeal health care. But the Senate and the President will never let that happen. Blacks are a big part of the reason. Those with incomes up to \$24, 352 for a family of three will be eligible for Medicaid. That is an increase of 4 million people who are not now insured. African Americans are uninsured at a rate twice that of White families.

Health care is a pivotal issue. The Neocons had complete control of Congress for 8 years. They have had control of the House of Representatives for at least 10 years of the last 12. They did nothing about health care reform while premiums were rising at 20% per year and medical emergencies were bankrupting half a million people a year. At the same time the Bush Neocon Republicans prevented desperate seniors, with huge drug costs from traveling to Canada or Mexico where drugs were regularly 50% cheaper and sometime 100% cheaper!

The question is this: do you want to trust your income and your benefits and your Social Security to those who have proved that they see you no differently from the way their ancestors looked at their slaves? Can you trust people who hold slavery and cruel and brutish attacks on innocent citizens, as the Klan did, as something to be admired? Would you recognize a KKK leader as someone to be put on a state’s license plate with admiration?

As we get closer to implementation of the ACA, the October 1 enrollment period, the GOP Neo-Fascists are doing their best to scare the American public. In Indiana, the Neo-Facist Republican Insurance commissioner says that prices will go up by 72% in the state that was the former national headquarters of the KluKluxKlan. Of course that is a lie.

In Georgia, the Republican Neo-Facist insurance commissioner says that Obamacare will cost an additional 198%. That is not only a lie...premiums will go down...but it is preposterous. You see the same lies that you saw about African-Americans. The Republicans are desperately trying to persuade us that it will cost too much, just as they have tried to persuade us that welfare is all about lack of ambition.

Last year, prices went up in California by 39%. Elsewhere they went up 29% and sometimes as much as 60%. Why? Not just because they can get away with it. They have done it so that when they are in the new exchanges mandated by the ACA (Obamacare) they can bring those prices down but they will still be higher than last year's prices. They can try this, but it won't work. Prices will come down.

The reality is that health insurance exchanges will bring costs down. How do we know? We have a test. It is called, strangely enough, Romneycare. In Massachusetts at a cost of less than 1% of the state budget, good, low-cost health insurance is offered with subsidies to people up to 133% of the poverty level. This includes many African Americans. Fewer than 2% of people in Massachusetts are without health care insurance versus 16% (some say higher than that) nation wide.

The Neo-Facist Republican plantation owners want to tailor the messages, to make the American slaves the victims because of their "lackadaisical" attitude towards life. The propagandists for the plantation owners, with their hundreds of daily television and radio broadcasts spread the lies about totally invented "death panels" and "government takeover of health care." Of course it is not true and never will be true.

Hospital chains and some pharmaceutical companies know how much money they stand to lose. Health care is approximately a \$2.5 trillion annual industry in the United States. A large percentage of that money will go directly from their very expensive bank accounts into the pockets of American citizens in

health care savings—as has happened already in pharmaceutical drugs for seniors--as soon as this legislation takes hold completely. That is why they are fighting so hard for “repeal.” They have inflated costs and the excess profits go in their pockets.

There is no difference between these people and the plantation owners and the slave traders. These are exactly the same kinds of people. Now they want to extend their ownership of more than merely people with Black skin and African heritage. They want to own everyone. They want to control your health care, your wages, the equity in your home, your child’s education and how much government you can have, even if—as with Social Security—you have paid for it.

In the New Slavery era, beginning in 2001, our Republican plantation owners have given us two fruitless, costly wars and sent the poor to fight them. They have twice or more cut taxes for the rich and created laws to enable corporations to pay no taxes at all. We have borrowed money from China, supposedly a Communist dictatorship with whom our Masters have aligned us to pay for these tax cuts and wars. They have purchased, with this borrowed money a greater military establishment than the rest of the world combined.

Yet, we lost to our Republican plantation owners about \$7.5 trillion of our net worth, and half of the net worth of African-Americans, setting them back about 35 years compared to White Americans. We have some 15 million people out of work, including about 20% of African-Americans.

U.S. corporations do not hire Americans but open plants in Brazil, India and China. The Republican plantation culture provides \$800 billion in tax cuts to the rich while at the same time cutting heating fuel subsidies for the poor, and cutting food stamps for millions of Americans who now must go to overburdened charities to survive.

Our new masters, the plantation owners of the new slavery, the Neo-Fascists, the Republican Tea Party Masters have returned the Klan in the form of ALEC to oppress and control the lives of the “poor. “ The Poor, that class of Americans who are lazy and who love the idea of living on half the amount of money it

takes to survive. Just as the slaves of their forefathers loved to work in the fields in the searing heat, loved to be whipped and chained.

But before we moan about our own lack of political will, and whine about ALEC taking over statehouse after statehouse, we need to remember our past. America condoned slavery, we ignored the Imported Americans for 375 years. If we right that wrong first, then we can move forward. Our first job, before or simultaneous with ending the aggressive plantation culture of the Republican Neo-Fascists is to attack the problems of the Imported Americans—the African-American communities of this country.

We need to end poor schools. We need to provide security. We need to create industry and jobs and small businesses owned by Blacks. We need to create economic opportunity for Blacks and that tide will raise all boats. We may not have personally imported human beings, but our country did and we now must pay the bill. But that bill will create an economy that will create equality and economic growth at the same time.