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Title

The African Americans' Struggle for Equality

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Declaration

I, **Bedjaoui Khenfer Adel**, do hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work and has not previously been submitted to any institution or university for a degree. I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources of the cited and quoted information. This work was certified and completed at Mohammed KHEIDER University of Biskra.

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to:

My beloved parents and my brother

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Abstract

The bitter history of African Americans during the era of slavery has a great effect on them today. A history full of suffering and strives toward their ancestors that fought for their new generation to be free and have equal rights as white. The legacy of their struggle against all kinds of repression was revived nowadays not for the same demands but for demanding equal treatment, especially in the justice system, a system that privileges the whites over black skin. The suffering of African Americans in the United States from inequities and racial discrimination is not something new to them. Even though they managed to reach the highest position in the government, they are still being marginalized in many areas. This study relies on historical approaches and some facts and events that took place in the United States, It shows that despite African Americans' success in politics, they are still being racially discriminated.

الملخص

سعوا كان التاريخ المرير لألميركيين الأفارقة خلال عصر العبودية تأثير كبير عليهم اليوم. تاريخ مليء بالمعاناة وحيث لمحاربة الظلم من أجل حرية الأجيال القادمة لتمتع بحقوق متساوية مثل البيض تم إحياء إرث نضالهم ضد كل أنواع القمع في الوقت الحاضر ليس من أجل نفس المطالب ولكن للمطالبة بالمعاملة المتساوية ، ال سيما في نظام العدالة الذي هو نظام يميز البيض على البشرة السوداء. على لم تكن معاناة الأميركيين من أصل أفريقي في الولايات المتحدة من الظلم والمعاملة العرقية شيئاً جديداً بالنسبة لهم المجالات الرغم من أنهم تمكنوا من الوصول إلى أعلى منصب في الحكومة إلا أنهم ما زالوا مهمشين في العديد من تعتمد هذه الدراسة على مقاربات تاريخية وعلى بعض الحقائق والأحداث التي وقعت في الولايات المتحدة أنه على الرغم من نجاح الأميركيين من أصل أفريقي في السياسة ، إلا أنهم ما زالوا يعاملون عنصرياً ناهيك عن استخدام الشرطة للعنف غير الضروري ضده

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

USA United States of America

NM Niagra Movement

NAACP National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NOI Nation Of Islam

MIA Montgomery Improvement Association

BPM Black Power Movement

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation

Key Words: Racial, Segregation, Discrimination, Slaves, Equality, Movements,

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General Introduction

The greatest nation in the world and the nation that always defends the repressed people, and helps the poorer countries going into wars against what is called dictators to spread freedom and democracy, its history has a completely different truth. The history of the United States (US) reveals its darker sides that were full of brutality against native inhabitants of what was called the new world and against the slaves who were brought from Africa.

Suffering has always been a part of African people in America swinging from poverty and diseases to being severely exploited as slaves. Slavery in the United States dated back to the discovery of the New World. The white settlers of the former Thirteen Colonies brought slaves from Africa to work especially on plantations. The life of the enslaved people was very difficult and unbearable since they were tortured and considered as properties. After the independence of the thirteen colonies and the creation of the United States of America, slaves' life had not changed, and continued to endure the same previous suffering. The issue of slavery in relation to the westward expansion led to disagreements between the Northern and Southern states which turned into a civil war. By the end of the civil war, slavery was constitutionally abolished, but the southerners' dissatisfaction led to the enactment of some laws by the federal south states to control the rights of the former slaves. By the end of the reconstruction era, the Jim Crow Laws institutionalized a new era of segregation and racial discrimination between the Blacks and Whites in all aspects of life. Consequently, the African Americans started a new journey looking for a new form of freedom and seeking for their integration. African Americans intellectuals and political activists led a series of political and cultural movements calling for the need to criminalize segregation laws and to have equal treatment with the white people.

In order to tackle the issue of the African Americans' struggle for equality and to assess

their contemporary status, the study primarily aims to answer the following questions:

How was the African Americans' life?

How did the African Americans react to systematic racial segregation?

What ways did they use to acquire equality and reach social integration?

Have the African Americans reached an absolute or satisfied status of equality?

Research Aims

African Americans played an essential part in shaping the United States as a nation. However, despite the inequities of the whites toward African Americans, without them, this great nation would not be like we know it today.

The objective of this research is to demonstrate the true image of the United States history against African Americans who lived and experienced unequal treatment with the whites from the era of slavery until now. This research also talks about the different methods that were and are still used by African Americans in order to gain full equality. It also seeks to show that despite all that the African Americans have achieved, they are still suffering systematic racial discrimination and they are still struggling to have a full kind of equality. **Methodology**

Regarding methodology, the current study relies on both primary and secondary sources. It deals with relevant research papers, books, and articles without mentioning some survey studies made by academics related to inequalities of African Americans. Moreover, this research depends on a historical approach to depict and demonstrate African American life during the slavery era. In addition to the analytical approach, it is important to analyze and assess the current status of African Americans. These approaches seem suitable to answer the questions raised about this thesis. In addition to that, the ninth edition of the MLA handbook of style is used in the current study.

Limitations of the Research

We faced different obstacles while carrying out and investigating this research. The lack of time was the first problem and also the lack of free sources, especially in chapter three.

In addition to the broad topic, in which some crucial events happened must be mentioned in order to answer the questions.

Structure of the Thesis

There are three chapters in the current thesis. The first chapter is entitled, “Historical Background of African Americans”. The chapter gives an overview of the origin of slavery. It describes how the European countries had established colonies in the New World It also describes how European countries established colonies in the New World and how they brought slaves to them. The chapter also explains the conditions of the enslaved people as slave laborers. Chapter Two is called “African Americans Reaction towards Segregation”, and deals with segregation laws that restricted the former slaves. Chapter two is also concerned with the way that the African Americans used to struggle and end discrimination actions against them and gain equal treatment. Whereas Chapter three which is entitled, “The Contemporary Status of African Americans”, provides an analysis of how African Americans are still suffering from unequal treatment by the United States government.

Chapter One

Historical Background of African Americans

1.1. Introduction

One of the best treasure troves in the 14th century was the discovery of the New World. A land that was unknown to most of the world except for their native people. A discovery that urged a lot of European countries to race for the sake for claim some of the richness that the land holds. Claiming land was not something easy during the 1st century of discovery. The exploitation of the land required manpower that's why the new settlements decided to build a bridge that link the three-continent of Europe, Africa, and the New World together to bring cheap laborers and enslaved people from Africa to the New World where the enslaved people had suffered a lot from their masters that all they want was the work must be done without caring about the hardship and condition that the slaves were experience.

1.2. Definition of Slavery

Slavery is a condition in which one human being was owned by another. A slave was considered by law as property, or chattel, which allow the enslaved victims to be classified as possession, and could be bought and sold. Most enslaved people were separated from their families and relatives (Jennings 121).

Slavery has different meanings in different societies. in an Article” The Study of Ancient and Modern Slave System” written by both Enrico Dal Logo and Constantina Katsari stated that Slavery, “is an institution whose practice has encompassed much of the documented history around the globe”. Thus, Few cultures have remained historically unaffected by it, although most have witnessed a more or less strong presence of slaves exploited for a variety of reasons at various times and to varying degrees." (640). which means some societies did not depend on slaves either for their plantation or at the house.

Slavery was a form of dependent labor performed by a non-family member. The slave was deprived of personal liberty and the right to move about geographically as he desired. There were likely to be limits on his capacity to make choices with regard to his occupation and sexual partners as well. Slavery was usually, but not always, involuntary. If not all of these characterizations in their most restrictive forms applied to a slave, the slave regime in that place is likely to be characterized as “mild”; if almost all of them did, then it ordinarily would be characterized as severe (Sofroniou 28).

1.3. The Settlement of British Colonies

During the 17th and early 18th centuries, the King James of England ordered both the Plymouth Company and the London Company to establish a colony in the New World, which is now part of the east of the USA (Richter 152).

The first colony was founded at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Many of the people who settled in the New World came to escape religious persecution. The Pilgrims, founders of Plymouth, Massachusetts, arrived in 1620. The colonists at Jamestown faced extreme hardships, they suffered from hunger, starvation, internal rebellion, extreme weather, and attacks from the native people (Richter 113).

In both Virginia and Massachusetts, the colonists flourished with some assistance from Native Americans. Despite the hardship and warfare with the native Indians, many European people were ready to move and settle in America for different purposes, some seeking to become rich, while others hoped to find safety from religious or political persecution. For them, America was looked up to as a land of promise (Thernstrom 57).

Over the next century, the English established 13 colonies which were Virginia, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

1.3.1. The Need for Laborers

In his book entitled; "Illustrated History of the USA", Bryn O'Callaghan stated that the American colonies had a huge demand for a workforce and indentured servants were introduced to meet the growing demand for cheap labor (14). Because of the variety of crops in the southern region, for example, South Carolina's land was suitable for rice while Virginia and Maryland specialized in tobacco. Southerners not only sold the crops throughout the colonies but also made a large profit exporting them to England (Doerflinger 346).

With European demand for more products such as cotton, sugar, and tobacco, only available in the New World, the need for Labours also increased. Because of the indenture's nature contract obliged them to work for a period of time to pay their debt. They generally worked from four to seven years, after which they became free. That is what made Plantation owners dissatisfied. It was getting harder to find people who would willingly choose to become indentured.

In addition, the loss of indentured servants as they fulfilled their contracts caused worker shortages. Throughout the 17th century, European settlers in North America turned to enslaved Africans as a cheaper and more plentiful labor source than indentured servants, who were mostly poor Europeans. Both indentured servants and Africans worked in the field of plantation in different tasks but for indentured servants, mainly white people their term for work was fixed and in a few years they would be free unlike African slaves who were properties and were submissive to work until their death and their children would replace them (O'Callaghan 15). This is due to the doctrine of Partus, stating that any child born in the colony would follow the status of his mother (Lamb 55)

Many Africans were kidnapped from the continent of Africa, forced into slavery in the American colonies, and exploited to work as servants and labor in the production of crops such as tobacco and cotton.

1.4. The Transatlantic Slave Trade

Nearly 12.5 million enslaved Africans were transported from the continent of Africa to the New World that was between 1500 and 1866 as part of the transatlantic slave trade. The only means of transportation at that time was a ship. Due to the conditions on board, many enslaved persons lost their lives before reaching the land. Captains of those ships sailed from Europe with goods, textiles, and guns for the exchange of African slaves (Alan 138). Since the middle of the 15th century, Africa has had a unique relationship with Europe that has resulted in Africa's devastation and depopulation while contributing to Europe's prosperity and growth. From then until the end of the 19th century, Europeans began to establish trade for African captives (Neba 44)

At first, this trafficking only supplemented a trade in human beings that already existed within Europe, in which Europeans had enslaved each other. Some enslaved Africans had also reached Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of the world before the mid-15th century, as a result of a trade of human beings that had also long existed in Africa. Africa was the only continent to be affected in this way, and this loss of population and the potential population was a major factor leading to its economic underdevelopment (Emma 127).

1.4.1. The Triangular Trade

It was a period when slaves were traded from Africa to the New World crossing the Atlantic ocean but the process was not direct. Triangular trade or triangle trade is trade between three ports or regions that operated between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Triangular trade usually evolved when a region had export commodities that were not required in the region from which its major imports came. It thus provided a method for

rectifying trade imbalances between the above regions. This was the common trade during and after 17th and 18th centuries according to Phyllis Rayin slaves, sugar, and rum between West Africa, the West Indies, and the northern colonies of British North America (120).

The Atlantic slave trade was the result of, among other things, labor shortage, itself in turn created by the desire of European colonists to exploit New World land and resources for capital profits. Native peoples were at first utilized as slave labor by Europeans until a large number died from overwork and Old World diseases.

Slave ships would leave European ports and sail to African ports loaded with goods manufactured in Europe. There, the slave traders would purchase enslaved Africans by exchanging goods. These included guns, ammunition, alcohol, Indigo dyed Indian textiles, and other factory-made goods, then sail to the Americas via the Middle Passage to sell their enslaved cargo in European colonies. Those African slaves were kidnapped and shipped in an inhuman manner and they were subject to abuse at the hand of the crew. The captives were chained together in their hands and necks and forced to march for a long-distance reaching the coast where the Europeans settled. Many of those slaves died during the voyage and others were terribly scared as it was the first time for them to see the sea and white men. Afterward, the slave ship would sail back to Europe to begin the cycle again (Kenneth 62).

1.4.2. The Middle Passage

The Middle Passage was the stage of the Atlantic slave trade in which millions of enslaved Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas as part of the triangular slave trade. British, the French and the Dutch had all established colonies of their own in America, and accordingly, they became slave traders due to the huge demands of their colonies for slaves to work and the demands for goods such as cotton and tobacco plantation production (Monaghan 9).

Though it is impossible to give accurate figures, some historians have estimated that 6 to

7 million enslaved people were imported to the New World during the 18th century alone, depriving the African continent of some of its healthiest and ablest men and women. between 1619 and 1860. Of these, nearly 18 percent died during the transatlantic voyage from Africa to the New World. A voyage could range from one to six months, depending on the weather. On large ships, several hundred slaves could be packed below decks. The Middle Passage was considered to be the cruelest journey for both the ship and the crew, but it was even harder for the slaves (Klein 130).

Olaudah Equiano was a former slave who described the horrors of the middle passage in his book titled *The Interesting Narrative of the Life*, he said that the closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died.

1.5. Slaves' Life in America

Despite the losses of many lives and the suffering of African captives on their way to the New World, their suffering didn't end on their arrival. They were exhausted from the deadly conditions of the ships, one described them as “walking skeletons covered over with a piece of tanned leather” (qt. in Kachur 64).

The crew of the ships prepared the African slaves well to be sold at the market. Even though their status at the beginning was working as indentured servants similar to the white servant but Africans did not volunteer their labor, unlike the whites. Over time, they slowly deteriorated their status until they permitted slavery and restricted their rights as human beings. African slaves worked many hours in harsh conditions, being abused by their owners (Beaulieu 929). Slaves were not considered human beings and their life varied greatly depending on many factors.

1.5.1. Working in Plantation Fields and Houses

The spread of agricultural plantations in the New World and the high demands for its products such as tobacco and sugarcane from European countries led to an increase in demands for laborers and slave trade even though, there were some enslaved Native Americans and white Europeans who came for the sake of getting rich in the new land and they can't offer a ride so they were obliged to work as indentured servants for few years to pay back their debts and demand for land. Many landowners also felt threatened and turned to African slaves as a more profitable and ever-renewable source of labor. African slaves were cheaper laborers, at their first step ashore in Jamestown, they were treated like white indentured servants but this situation did not last due to the laws passed in Massachusetts in 1641 and Virginia in 1661 where any freedom that might have existed for African labor was taken away (Baldwin 16).

African slaves were mainly divided into two categories the first one, as those who worked in plantation fields, some of them on small farms while others on large ones. The treatment of slaves where differ from one landowner to another. Some landowners obliged slaves to work ten or more hours a day, "from day clean to first dark," six days a week.

During planting or harvesting season, planters required slaves to stay in the fields for 15 or 16 hours a day. When they were not raising a cash crop, slaves grew other crops, such as corn or potatoes, cared for livestock, cleared fields, cut wood, and repaired buildings, and fences. Their life was harsh, they lived in small shacks with a dirt floor and little or no furniture. In fields, they were supervised by the overseer, often a white man who directed the daily work of the slaves, but occasionally an enslaved black man—a "driver"—promoted to the position by his master. They were hired to get the most work out of the slaves and most of the time the cruelty came from them. In some cases, when slaves complained that they were being unfairly treated, slaveholders would most often be

very protective of their "property" and would release the overseer (Martin , et al. 401).

While the second category was called House servant, often large plantations required some African slaves to work in the plantation home. These slaves enjoyed far better circumstances. They worked indoor jobs and lived in better quarters and received better food. They sometimes were able to travel with the owner's family. They performed tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of masters' children. Domestic slaves did not often associate themselves with plantation slaves. They often aspired to arrange courtships for their children with other domestic slaves.

1.5.2. Slaves' Social Life

The African marriage was not recognized by any law, and they could be separated and sold separately. Most enslaved Africans married and maintained monogamous relationships and lived under one roof. Some historians believed that nearly one-third of all slave marriages were broken by the sale of one of the family members (Paul, et al. 360).

To increase the number of their slaves, many slave owners encouraged their marriage because for them mean more money if they decided to sell them and get the plantation field done quickly due to their numbers. Slave owners in the south were more interested in encouraging slave marriage than in the north because they recognized the importance and advantages of the increase of the slave population.

Young children, most of the time were raised by other enslaved women because their mothers were obliged to give birth and return to do their tasks either on field plantation or at the house. Frederick Douglass explained in his Narrative "I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from my home" (3).

Douglass' experience reveals that slaves had been deprived of one of the most basic comforts of life a family. Children of the slaves had learned that their parents were not the ultimate authority and their lives depended upon their masters.

Children of enslaved African as young as three or four were put to work, usually in special trash gangs weeding fields, carrying drinking water, picking up trash, and helping in the kitchen. Also, young children fed chickens and livestock, gathered wood chips for fuel, and drove cows to pasture. Between the ages of seven and twelve, boys and girls were put to work in intensive fieldwork while Older or physically handicapped slaves were put to work in cloth houses, spinning cotton, weaving cloth, and making clothes (Carter 23).

1.5.3. Female Slaves

Not only did African men endure many forms of abuse and punishment, but their daughters and wives faced more than men. Harriet Jacobs, one of the few slave narratives written by a woman, wrote: "Slavery is terrible for men, but it is far more terrible for women" (66).

They worked in the fields just like men, but then they had to perform their womanly duties at home, doing the cooking, cleaning, and washing even though they had worked as long and as hard as men all day. Many black women were exploited in sexual ways by their masters, from abusing, harassing, and rapping to being forced into concubines. Many women slaves gave birth to their masters in which slave owners use them as concubines. This forced the slave woman to bear the wrath of her mistress because of the skin of the baby. The jealousy of the mistresses led sometimes to the sale of the mother of the boy or even to abuse of them both (Landtman 281).

Women at auction sometimes had to strip in order to be inspected by potential buyers and be introduced with scanty clothing. The quality of black women was measured by their capacity for reproduction. They were gynecologically examined to determine whether they could give birth or not, for those who have not met this quality were being

stripped of their clothing, oiled down, and poked and prodded by potential buyers in the auction as a damaged product (Carter 130)

1.6. The Independence of the Thirteen Colonies

After a revolutionary struggle in the thirteen colonies, independence was declared, and the United States of America was founded. The Constitution of the United States, which is the supreme law of the nation, was written in 1787 in the state of Philadelphia, ratified in 1788, and in operation since 1789. Its first three words, "We the People," assert that the United States government exists to protect and serve its own people (Ross 21).

Although, many of the Founding Fathers acknowledged that slavery violated the ideal of liberty that was so central to the American Revolution, the first draft of the constitution of the United States said nothing about the abolition of slavery. In Article 1, Section 9, Clause 1 prohibited the federal government from limiting the importation of "persons" instead of saying enslaved Africans. It was like a compromise between the Southern states, where slavery was pivotal to the economy, and the Northern states wanted all states to be united together so they avoided mentioning any law that might make the southerners angry (Reginald 105).

1.6.1. Pre-Civil War African-Americans Life

Life of enslaved African-Americans didn't change either after the declaration of independence or the constitution of the United States. Each slave state enacted its laws to restrict the life of the slaves. In North Carolina for example there was a law passed in 1830 that stated that any free person who shall teach, or attempt to teach, any slave inside the State to read or write, with the exception of the use of figures, would be punished. Punishments varied depending on the person who taught the slave. The reason for this law was to eliminate any things that excite dissatisfaction in their minds thus leading to revolt (Joy 108).

There were some laws that restricted the transportation of slaves from one place to another. For example, the Sundown Rule in California was a law that prohibited slaves and other minorities to be out after dark unless they had a written permit from their owners to walk inside the county. If the police caught slaves after sundown, they would face excessive brutality from the police. To avoid being caught, slaves tried not to take the night shift, thus having a direct result in a decrease in unemployment in African-Americans communities (Martin 70).

The previous Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 required the return of enslaved persons who had fled. It aimed to compel authorities in the Free States to hand over fugitives from slavery to their owners. The original Fugitive Slave Act was not effective because some Northern states refused to assist Southern authorities to capture the escaped slaves while other states required runaway slaves to face a jury trial before being handed to their enslavers in Southern states. In 1850, an Act was passed by the Senate by James M. Mason under the name Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 in which all officials were required to follow the affidavit to arrest the escaping slaves if they refused to arrest them, they would be fined \$1000 as punishment. After this draft was passed, law enforcement agents all across the country were compelled to capture persons suspected of fleeing captivity (Williams 150). The owners of the fugitive slave just had to provide an affidavit to a Federal. The act resulted in the capture and enlistment of free Blacks into slavery, as suspected fugitive slaves had no rights in court and could not defend themselves against allegations (Don 154).

One of the well-known cases that confirmed the ineffectiveness of the American constitution regarding African Americans was the case of Dred Scott v. Sandford. Dred Scott was a slave who belonged to John Emerson who lived in Missouri. In 1833 Emerson took Scott from Missouri to Illinois and finally into the Wisconsin Territory. After Mr. Emerson died Scott tried to purchase his freedom but Emerson's widow refused after that Scott with help of an antislavery lawyer filed a lawsuit against Mrs. Emerson in Missouri court. He demanded his freedom because he was being in a free state and the territory had

released them from the chains of slavery but the decision of this case was shocking the court ruled that a slave who lived in a free state or territory was not entitled to his freedom and that African Americans were not and could never be citizens of the United States. Because the United States Constitution was never intended to include persons of African heritage as citizens, whether enslaved or free, the rights and advantages that the Constitution gave to American citizens could not apply to them (Richard 39).

1.6.2. The Abolitionist Movement

The abolitionist movement appeared at the beginning in Western Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to end the practice of slavery. The abolitionist movement was a coordinated attempt to abolish slavery.

Few Enlightenment secular intellectuals criticized it for infringing on man's liberties. The fever of the abolitionist movement reached the English colonies in the new land. The Quakers were the first organization to demand that slavery must be abolished in the British colonies. They petitioned the United States Congress in 1790 to abolish slavery. Because labor was needed in the colonies in the 1600s and 1700s, the slave trade became more successful and a competitive industry (Ferrel 4).

Most early abolitionists were white, religious Americans, but some of the most prominent leaders of the movement were also Black men and women who had escaped from bondage. In 1690, there were fewer than 2000 blacks in the northern colonies; when the first Quakers protested against the African slave trade (Ferrel 4). In an early effort to stop slavery, a meeting in 1816 was held at the Davis Hotel in Washington, D.C between Robert Finley gathered some of the nation's most respected attorneys, businessmen, and politicians, and created the American Colonization Society (ACS), an organization dedicated to establishing a colony in West Africa to send African American slaves (Ousmane 12).

The fight against slavery was not merely between abolitionists and slave owners,

supporters of the white man's right to hold human property were also a source of contention among abolitionists as they debated aims and tactics (Ferrel 69). American Colonization Society failed due to many reasons including the lack of interest by free blacks, such as black activist James Forten immediately rejected the ACS, writing in 1817 that "we have no wish to separate from our present homes for any purpose whatever" (qtd. in Wesley 250). There were also oppositions by some white abolitionists including William Lloyd Garrison and Abraham Lincoln who refused to send African American slaves to Africa (Manisha 20).

The abolitionist movement exacerbated tensions between the slave-owning North and the slave-owning South States. It broke out into raids and attacks. The abolitionist faced fierce resistance from the pro-slavery often with violent acts. Whenever there is an anti-slave meeting, a mob storm into it. Elijah Lovejoy a white abolitionist and newspaper editor got shot after a crowd tried to destroy his fourth printing press (Judith 47) despite the risks of the white abolitionists from assassination, they continued their fight in the name of liberty for all people.

1.7. The American Civil War

Despite last-ditch attempts to work out a political compromise, the first months of 1861 saw a steady disintegration of relations between North and South and political leaders of the two sections. By early February, seven states had seceded from the Union and taken steps toward establishing the Confederacy. The American Civil War broke out on April 12, 1861, between the Government and The Confederate States of America (CSA) (Virginius and Douglas 54).

The election of the Republican Abraham Lincoln as president without the votes of a single Southern state was a bitter four-way fight. In fact, slavery was the main issue that caused the sectional tension between the North and the South and created the political gap. In the American Civil War enslaved people had a share of the war. Lincoln's administration debated whether or not to allow black soldiers to join the army. On July 17, 1862, Congress

passed the Second Confiscation and Militia Act that give freedom to slaves who have masters in the Confederate Army. Around 179,000 Black men served as soldiers in the Union Army by the end of the Civil War, accounting for 10% of the Union Army, while another 19,000 fought in the Navy. During the conflict, about 40,000 African American troops died. (Caraway 65).

1.8. The End of Slavery in the US

The Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of slavery was in September 1862 by Abraham Lincoln allowed the Confederate states to rejoin the Union while retaining slavery. Despite this incentive, none of the renegade states returned to the fold of the federal government. The Preliminary Proclamation was largely ignored in the unconquered South, as a hollow gesture that offered no substantial change in how the war would be waged. Slaves were crucial to the Southern cause because of their labor on fields and plantations, as well as their work in building entrenchments and fortifications. To guarantee the abolition of slavery, Lincoln knew that the Emancipation Proclamation would need to be followed by a constitutional amendment (Culverhouse 248).

The president argued that the rapid adoption of the amendment might stop the duration of the war. Abraham Lincoln faced a lot of setbacks during his efforts to gain the votes of Congress to pass the 13th Amendments that abolished slavery by the constitution in all the territories. And finally, the amendment was ratified on December 6, 1865, and ended the argument about whether slavery was legal in the United States (Judith 17).

After the Civil War, some southern states began aggressively passing laws restricting former slaves' rights such as the Black Codes. On July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution was passed as a response to those laws and to rebuild a torn nation. The 14th amendment guaranteed African Americans citizenship and equal civil and legal rights. They were grouped together under the umbrella of "all people born or naturalized in the United States" means that all people have the same rights including African

Americans (Jeff 236).

As a reconstruction to guarantee the full rights of African-Americans, the 15th amendment was adopted in the United States Constitution in 1870. The 15th Amendment was passed to preserve African American men's voting rights. Despite the passage of the amendment, by the late 1870s, discriminatory practices were being employed to prohibit African-Americans from exercising their right to vote, particularly in the South. African Americans were able to vote only after the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Edward and Henschen 186) which means that the 15th amendment could not preserve African American rights in the Southern States.

1.9. Conclusion

After the discovery of the New World, many European countries built settlements as a way to gain territory there to control the area. In the beginning, it was a safe haven for those seeking freedom. Many people immigrated to the New Land for the sake of having new opportunities to be rich. The flow of immigration helped to establish new colonies. Due to the fertile vast lands, the colonies needed manpower to cover the demands of products to sell them back in their countries.

Consequently, they started bringing African captives and slaves to the New World. The Blacks were not treated as laborers but as slaves, many of them worked in large plantation fields while others as small farmers. Both men and women lived a hard life on the plantation fields from working long hours to abusing them physically. Women worked in fields, and houses, and were also used for reproduction. Men could do nothing to their daughters and wives because they were all properties in the hand of their masters.

Following, the independence of the thirteen colonies and the creation of the US, the African Americans' situation did not change and the whites kept considering them as property and practicing violence and humiliation on them.

The disagreement between the two sections, the North and South on the issue of slavery led to an extensive conflict between them. After a long struggle, the Civil War erupted.

Chapter Two

African Americans Reaction towards Segregation

2.1. Introduction

After the end of the Civil War and the emancipation of slaves, the African Americans' life did not notice a great change due to some discriminatory laws that were enacted to restrict their rights. The whites considered themselves superior to the African Americans because of their skin color, believing that the black people were created by God only to serve them. Consequently, the era witnessed an awakening amongst African Americans who reacted against those injustice laws, and they started to strive in order to eliminate those barriers that prevented them from full and equal freedom. This reaction emerged due to some of the black intellectuals that were determined to bring equality. However, they used different ways, from non-violent movements such as political parties and marches to violent movements like the Black Panther Party, to show their discontentment with the inequality that was spread on a daily basis.

2.2. Segregation and Racial Inequality

2.2.1. The Black Codes

After slavery was abolished during the Civil War, black codes were enacted to limit African Americans' freedom and assure their availability as a cheap workforce. Despite the fact that the Union victory released around 4 million enslaved people, the topic of freed Black people's position in the postwar South remained unsolved. Many states ordered Black people to sign yearly labor contracts under black codes; if they refused, they risked

being jailed, fined, and forced to work with low wages. The American government developed Black Codes after the war to restrict black people's behavior in society. The Freedmen's Bureau was established on March 3, 1865, and its main duty was to protect blacks from the hostile Southern states, but it also wanted to retain blacks in their jobs as workers so that plantation production could continue and the South economy could recover (Theodore 57).

Black codes were laws used as a model for those approved by other states, beginning in 1865 with South Carolina, Alabama, and Louisiana and continuing in 1866 with Florida, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Mississippi was the first state to pass a new Black Code, commencing with "An Act to Confer Civil Rights on Freedmen" (Strain 16). This regulation limited Blacks' ability to rent property outside of cities, essentially prohibiting them from generating money through independent farming. It compelled Blacks to provide documented proof of work every January. Further, The legislation described violation of this condition as vagrancy, which was punished by arrest, and a \$5 fine, which would be deducted from the arrestee's salary. Consequently, runaway laborers were required to return, or they would lose their salary for the year, under provisions similar to fugitive slave laws (Oberholtzer 128). Thus such laws make slaves take into consideration the punishment before attempting to run away.

While South Carolina was the second state to establish Black Codes, having passed the Thirteenth Amendment on November 13—with the caveat that Congress had no jurisdiction to govern the legal status of freedmen. According to newly elected governor James Lawrence Orr that black should make be more obedient to comply with laws and get their job done (qtd. in Novak 4).

Black codes were designed in the first place to limit black people's ability to own property or lease land, as well as restrictions on mobility, which were designed expressly for emancipated slaves. These regulations were meant to establish a limited black

workforce that reflected the slave labor system as closely as possible (Laura 34). Also to limit them from having more rights or status as white does.

2.2.2. Segregation in Schools and Hospitals

Jim Crow laws resulted in increased discrimination in public places and frequent attempts to separate public schools. Those laws almost enjoyed the legal protection of the U.S. Supreme Court and remained constitutionally protected until President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Jim Crow laws allowed whites in the South to prevent blacks from registering to vote, serving on a jury or school board, or running for political offices because they were regarded as an "innately inferior and barbarous race" (qtd. in Leslie 39).

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is a civil rights organization in the United States that was founded in 1909 by a group that included W. E. B. Du Bois, Mary White Ovington, Moorfield Storey, and Ida B. Wells as an interracial effort to advance justice for African Americans and to put an end to segregation in schools by encouraging African-American parents to send their children to white schools. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was a landmark 1954 Supreme Court case in which the justices ruled unanimously that racial segregation of children in public schools was unconstitutional. The event took place when Oliver Brown African-American took his daughter to a white public school but they refused her to attend the school because there was a school for colored people. In 1951, a class-action lawsuit was brought in the United States District Court for the District of Kansas against the Board of Education of the City of Topeka, Kansas. Thirteen Topeka parents sued on behalf of their twenty children (Epps 302). refusing the segregation of their children in schools and demanding integration with other white children.

Segregations also were in hospitals that separated wards of whites and African Americans. Carolina and Mississippi, for example, had laws requiring broad segregation in

hospitals. Black nurses were also necessary for these two states for black patients. Alabama legislation made it illegal for white female nurses to care for black male patients.

On October 6, 1915, Alabama legislation went into effect forbidding white female nurses from caring for black men in hospital wards. The law was said to be opposed by a large number of people, particularly those with a stake in hospitals (Monroe 49).

2.2.3. Racial Discrimination in Public Facilities

An incident that happened in the 1875 Civil Rights Act was allegedly violated in the California event. A black fan, Charles Green, was turned away from a San Francisco theater after purchasing a ticket to a concert by the all-black Tennessee Jubilee Singers from the state's all-black Fisk University. After being escorted from the movie by a police officer, Green filed a federal lawsuit, claiming that his rights as an American had been infringed. The theater's lawyer contended at the trial that a private company has the right to refuse service to anybody for any reason. Green appealed to the United States Supreme Court, which agreed and cleared the theater owner of all charges (Leslie 40). This incident proves that the Act during this era was not effective.

Sometimes there were no laws that prohibited the African-Americans from voting but the white found other techniques that were quite effective in keeping them out of the polls in the former Confederate states. Terror, force, and fear were the most successful ways; the Ku Klux Klan and kindred groups used ropes, gunshots, and blazing crosses to scare many blacks away; fear of losing a job, a house, or a life worked effectively in limiting black voter participation. The number of blacks lynched each year in the 1890s averaged more than 100, and in some years it was closer to 200 (Leslie 43).

Moreover, there also another incident that was one of the famous cases was *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. The legality of a Louisiana regulation requiring railways to offer separate and equal accommodations for black and white passengers was challenged in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). The text of the Fourteenth Amendment which prohibited states from

denying anybody life, liberty, or property without due process of law or equal protection under the law did not settle that constitutional question definitively. It did not expressly prohibit racial classifications, and equal protection of the laws did not imply that "equal but distinct" facilities are not permitted. Plessy bought a ticket on a train from New Orleans to Covington, Louisiana, on June 7, 1892, and sat in an empty seat in a whites-only compartment. He was detained and incarcerated after refusing to exit the car at the conductor's request. After being found guilty of breaking the 1890 legislation in a New Orleans court, Plessy filed a petition against the presiding judge, Hon. John H. Ferguson, alleges that the law violated the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause. *Plessy v. Ferguson* was decided by the Supreme Court on May 18, 1896. The Court held that the 14th Amendment was safeguarded only extended to political and civil rights (such as voting and jury service), not "social rights," when it declared separate-but-equal facilities on intrastate trains valid (sitting in the railroad car of your choice). The *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision established the "separate but equal" doctrine as a constitutional basis for segregation, securing the Jim Crow South's continuation for the next half-century (Perman 18).

2.2.4. Discrimination in Employment

In northern cities, black males had significantly more difficulty getting and holding work than white men, and suffer unemployment as a result of direct discrimination in the labor market or as a result of white employers' adoption of screening hurdles that reflect these employees' lack of access to suitable training or education. Those who got the chance to find a job lack access to good-paying jobs. Not only black employees were often forced into lower-paying occupations, but many of the duties they do benefit whites, which was impossible since whites did not want to interact with blacks (Joe 25).

Whites felt that any direct contact with black people would cause them harm and that any bodily interaction would put them in dangerous physical and moral relationships with persons who were 'unclean'. The majority of African Americans worked in domestic and

personal services, as well as in the iron, steel, textile, railroad, and metal industries, and as general laborers. One popular interpretation was that African Americans lack the talents that white people possess. Another factor was that employers are reluctant to recruit talented African-Americans (Reynolds et al. 230).

2.3. The Civil Rights Movements

2.3.1. Niagara movement 1905

The Niagara Movement (NM) was considered the first civil rights movement for African Americans, established in 1905 by many prominent community leaders and a notable number of lawyers including W.E.B Du Bois and William Monroe Trotter. In 1905, the inaugural Niagara Conference was held in Ontario, Canada. They had intended to meet in Buffalo, New York. Still, after facing racial prejudice at a motel in Buffalo, they moved north to Niagara Falls, Ontario. The twenty-nine African-American guys in the group came from all around the country. NM fought for equal economic and proper educational opportunities for black men and women, as well as the right to vote. Through their denunciation of racial discrimination and call for an end to segregation, members of the Niagara Movement conveyed a powerful message to the whole country, and The Niagara Movement's ideals were generally opposed to Booker T. Washington's ideology of accommodationism in which he urged blacks to accept discrimination for the time being and concentrate on elevating themselves through hard work and material prosperity (Meghan 66). The Philosophy of Mr. Booker T. Washington was refused by many black leaders.

In four decades, the first northern race riot took place in Abraham Lincoln's hometown, where eight black were killed and more than 2000 fled the city. Black and white activists, including members of the Niagara Movement, thought a new, more powerful, interracial organization was required to oppose racism (Angela 71). There were some inside conflicts in the organization but this riot paved the way for the NAACP, to continue their legal

fighting against Jim Crow laws.

2.3.2. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida Bell Wells-Barnett, Mary White Ovington, and others formed the NAACP in 1909 in response to the obstacles that faced the African Americans, particularly in the aftermath of the 1908 Springfield (Illinois) Race Riot. Some of the original members were involved with Du Bois' Niagara Movement, a civil rights organization. NAACP's demands are almost the same as NM's but with great determination. The NAACP worked to ensure that all individuals had access to the rights provided by the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the US Constitution, which, respectively, promised an end to slavery, equal protection under the law, and the right to vote for all males. As a result, the NAACP's objective was to assure minority group citizens' political, educational, and social equality, as well as to abolish race discrimination. Through democratic methods, the NAACP strove to eliminate all forms of racial prejudice (Christopher 47). NAACP organized anti-lynching marches also called Silent March and pushed the American people and government to confront the horror of lynching. On July 28, 1917, 8,000 black Americans marched silently down Fifth Avenue in New York City in protest of continuous murder, violence, and racial injustice. The NAACP rightly claimed that any black person may be lynched, dismissing the bogus rationale that mobs only hanged males who were dangerous criminals. The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill made it illegal for a gang of three or more individuals to assault somebody without legal permission. The Dyer Bill was passed successfully by the House of Representatives on January 26, 1922 (Nikki, et al. 256).

2.3.3. Nation of Islam (NOI) 1930

Nation of Islam was founded in the 1930s by Wallace Fard Muhammed. The Nation was proposed by Muhammad as an alternative to Christianity, which he referred to be a white man's religion. The NOI opposed the nonviolent protests of the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) to eliminate segregation and instead aimed to break away from White society and build separate communities. Malcolm X became more well-known in the Nation as the

nation became popular and grew rapidly. The Nation increased from 400 to 40,000 active members between 1952 and the end of the decade (Robinson 43). Malcolm X was considered one of the famous African American civil rights activists, and a proponent of Black Nationalism. Malcolm saw racism as giving white men illegitimate or immoral power, and he advised African American males confronting such illegitimate aggression to protect themselves "by any means necessary", even violence. When disadvantaged groups, such as Black men, utilized violence to combat the illegitimate violence of dominant groups, such as white males, it became legitimate (Theresa 250). Malcolm believed that the black community has the right to use aggressive methods if they were being treated violently.

2.3.4. Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA)

Rosa Parks a 42 years old woman from Montgomery founded a back seat designed for African America in buses because segregation at that time existed. When the white man got on the bus but he couldn't find a seat designed for white in front, the bus driver ordered Parks and three other African Americans to stand up and leave her sits to the white, Parks refused to give up her seat and got arrested and fined \$10. Parks was considered the mother of the modern-day civil rights movement because she was already active in NAACP with her husband (Steve 290).

As news of the boycott spread, African American leaders in Montgomery mobilized to its cause. Approximately 40,000 Black bus riders boycotted the system the next day with some of the Black leaders gathered including community leader Martin Luther King Jr to form a Montgomery Improvement Association. Martin Luther was one of the most famous activists in the history of the United States. Furthermore, The MIA decided to plan a Boycott of the Montgomery Bus System to react against this incident. They succeeded to organize The bus boycott in Montgomery which lasted 381 days. After that, The Supreme Court declared segregated sitting was illegal on November 14, 1956 (Surajit, et al 225). It counts as one of the greatest achievements made by Martin Luther King.

2.3.5. Martin Luther King and the March on Washington

A massive protest march occurred in August 1963, when more than 250,000 people from all races gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the gathering was to call attention to the problems and inequities that African Americans had been confronting a century after emancipation. They called for Demanding jobs equality and freedom. The March was planned in 1941 by A. Philip Randolph, the founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and a civil rights pioneer but he called off the planned march after his meeting with President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue an executive order prohibiting discrimination against workers in the defense and government sectors, as well as establishing the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) to examine racial discrimination complaints (Nina 281).

Following the brutal attacks on civil rights activists in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, the emergence of major protests erupted in the nation's capital. Martin Luther King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference decided to plan a march for freedom while Randolph for jobs equality. The two organizations agreed to combine their efforts into one big demonstration, with Randolph preparing a march for employment and King and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) planning one for freedom. On August 28, 1963, a historic meeting took place.

At the Lincoln Memorial, almost 250,000 people assembled where Martin Luther king's speech "I Have Dream" became an iconic speech for freedom; "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed" (qtd. in Eric28). King was considered one of the black prominent leaders in the history of the United States because of his belief in a nonviolent approach to protesting, he accomplished a lot for his own people without any aggressive means. Moreover, His involvement throughout the civil rights struggle helped black Americans who had previously been denied access to school and jobs (Erin 6). King with his philosophy of non-violent protesting managed to gain a lot for the

black community and succeeded in putting an end to segregation and combating prejudice in the US.

2.3.6. The Civil Rights Act of 1964

In 1964, a Civil Rights Act was passed by congress which eliminated racial segregation in publicly funded schools, hospitals, public transportation, and other public venues, as well as the eradication of open and explicit racial discrimination in employment procedures. It was mainly reinforced by the Fourteenth Amendment to provide equal treatment under the law to all people and to preserve the Fifteenth Amendment's guarantee of voting rights. It was proposed by the 35th president of the United States John F. Kennedy in 1963 but failed because of the filibuster those who were members of a legislative body have the power to delay or entirely prevent decisions (Don 130).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 effectively ended the post-Reconstruction South's Jim Crow legacy and essentially eradicated overt and legally sanctioned forms of discrimination against blacks across the country. Those acts were the results of many years of struggle made by African-American movements and with the help of white supporters (Bernard 1).

2.3.7. The Black Power Movement (BPM)

The motive for creating the BP movement by Stokely Carmichael was for the sake of creating economic, social, and political power of their own, rather than seeking integration into a white-dominated society. Before the foundation of the movement, there was James Meredith who wanted to do a solo march, walking from Memphis, Tennessee, to Jackson Mississippi. In order to promote Black voter registration and protest persistent discrimination in his home state but he got shot and wounded. Martin Luther King, Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and Floyd McKissick of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) decided to keep the March Against Fear going in James Meredith's honor. Martin Luther King and Carmichael renewed their alliance in early 1968. But in

April 1968, King was assassinated in Memphis. This event forced Carmichael to form the Black Power movement (Peniel 232).

The black power movement was very crucial in this era because most of the political movements were seeking only integration with the white while the black power movement emphasized black self-reliance and self-determination over their own businesses, schools, and community services. Moreover, they demanded to embrace their own culture and history through lessons in schools and universities. Also, they appeal to strengthen the black community more in economic abilities (Abiola and Biodun 174). The Black power changed the way of thinking of most African Americans instead of integrating with the white system they could create their own.

2.3.8. Black Panther Party

Even though some civil rights movements that followed the non-violent methods achieved some remarkable results but Huey Newton and Bobby Seale have different opinions about that. For them, the Government did nothing to save the lives of the African American community. In 1961, Newton and Seale met at Merritt College in Oakland, California where they formed the Negro History Fact Group to demand to their College to offer a class about the history of the black (Flores 281).

In October 1966, Newton and Seale decided to form a political party and an organization called the Black Panther Party in response to the assassination of Black nationalist Malcolm X and the Police Brutality against the Black community. BPP was originally called Black Panther Party For Self-Defence and armed organization and its main objectives were to protect the Black community from the police, monitoring police activities in Oakland and some other cities. The Leaders of the BPP viewed their group as a political party whose purpose was to elect more African Americans to political office while the government portrayed them as a gang and a threat to the internal security of the nation. Members of the BPP reached over 2000 in 1968, they used to wear black berets and black leather jackets sometimes holding arms on the streets. The group gained international attention and became

a symbol of the Black Power movement (Gus 243). For the party program, Newton and Seale marked on Marxist doctrine. In a ten-point program, they articulated the organization's philosophical principles and political goals. the Ten-Point Program was a set of demands that BPP wanted to achieve in order to get full equality with whites and make an end to brutality against the blacks. The first and second points were about the full freedom to determine their own destiny as a black community and equal opportunities among whites in employment. While the fourth and the seventh were about a need for a decent house and called to make an end to police brutality. BPP outlined their demands on the tenth point as “We Want Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice, And Peace” (qtd. in David 24).

The FBI considered BPP a threat and a source of violence and an aggressive organization that could destabilize the nation. As FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said the Black Panther Party "without question, represents the greatest threat to the internal security of the country" because of its' political objective and tactics, which threatened America's core roots (Mehrsa 188). The Black Panther Party became more involved in violence with police in which Huey Newton was accused of killing Oakland police officer John Frey in 1967. In 1968, Newton was found guilty of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to two to fifteen years in prison. The conviction was eventually dismissed by an appellate court decision (Alex 88).

A secret counterintelligence effort led by the FBI operation called Cointelpro. The aim of this operation was to use existing disputes amongst Black Nationalist groups to harm the Panthers. They also sought to destroy and demolish the Black Panthers' Free Breakfast for Children Program and other neighborhood social projects that were founded and run by the Black Panther Party. They started to create a rift within the members of the party. One of the Black Panther Party members called Alex Rackley was tortured and murdered by another Black Panther member in 1969, suspecting that he was a police informant (Michael 207).

Fred Hampton was a member of the Black Panther Party in the position of one of the leaders because other leaders were imprisoned, assassinated, or exiled. An FBI informant

called William O'Neal infiltrated Chicago's members and gave information about Hampton including a sketch of the floor plan of his apartment. In December 1969, William drugged Hampton, and in the early morning, police raided Hampton's apartment while he sleeping holding his gunshot. They shot him in his chest and as he was fallen his gun was discharged and it was one bullet fired from the panthers during the raid Contrary to what the police said that a hundred bullets were fired and the raid was fierce. His death marked the end of the Black Panther Party (Alex 88).

2.4. Conclusion

Racial laws and other discriminatory actions toward African-Americans ignited the heart of some intellectual African-Americans to respond and put an end to those injustice laws that existed to limit their way of life. Although the Black Codes and Jim Crows laws were made by whites to submit African Americans to them, in the end, they failed due to the persistence of the African Americans to reject discrimination that was set by whites. In their struggle for equality, African Americans used different methods and tactics to achieve their goals. So they started simply by non-violent protesting and marches as a way to call attention to them and they achieved great results in doing so, but some other black leaders preferred a more aggressive approach to reach their goals by using violent movements such as the Black Panther Party did(Mariam 6). However, there were more results in non-violent movements than the violent ones.

Chapter Three

Current African Americans Status in the American Society

3.1. Introduction

Despite all the achievements that African Americans have gained, institutional discrimination is still practiced against them, especially by the justice system. Some violent police actions paved the way for a new era of struggle against police brutality toward the black community. Some incidents have ignited a feeling of anger inside their hearts to revive their long legacy of struggle carried by their ancestors.

This chapter deals with the inequities that black people are still experiencing now, a movement that rose from the ashes called Black lives Matter brought lost memories about the struggle of the black community to have equal rights and treatment. Some sorts of modern Jim Crow laws are still exercised with some law enforcement that executed lots of African descent because of the system that privileged the white people over them.

3.2. African American Progress

Despite the racial obstacles that face African Americans on daily basis, still there is some progress in their lives. When it comes to politics, there is a significant contrast between 1870 and today. In the 1870s, there was only one black U.S. senator, Hiram R. Revels, a Mississippi Republican, who was elected to fill an unfilled seat by his state's legislature, while in, 2021, there were 1,994 members of the United States Senate, 11 of whom were African Americans, demonstrating how far African-American involvement had progressed.

Despite the fact that there are no Black governors in office now, and haven't been since Deval Patrick's retirement in 2015, there were races among African Americans in which three Black candidates were seeking to be elected governor of Virginia in November 2021,

including two who wanted to be the state's first Black female governor. There are a lot of African American politicians who reached a high status in the government such as Colin L. Powell who was the first black secretary of state in which he was appointed on Jan. 20, 2001. Also, African Americans reached the highest status such as Condoleezza Rice was the first female African-American secretary of state and the first woman to serve as a national security advisor in the George W. Bush administration. Moreover, the Election of Barack Obama also was a historical event that marked the history of the United States for two terms (Jessie 203). Recently Kamala Harris, an African-American woman, pledged to be the first black woman, African-American, and person of Asian origin to join Joe Biden's government as a vice president (Arihant 44). Harris' win is considered another step forward in Black Americans' slow but steady advancement.

3.3. The Illusion of Barack Obama, 2009 - 2017

3.3.1. Barack Obama as President

Who would believe that one day an African-American can run for the presidency and win, or who would once imagine that slaves could run for the presidency? Most of the demands of some African American movements were only to have the right to vote and the right to equal treatment. Being able to go wherever they want without a permit to move or being under threat of lynching is a big achievement for them. The year 2009 was unlike any year for both African Americans and the world as a whole. On the day of January 20, 2009, most African-Americans and white witnessed this historical moment that entered the history of the United States in which the 44th president of the United States was not a white person but he was an African descent. This event was considered to be the first time in the history of this nation. Barak Obama stood on the steps of the capitol to swear and even he took the oath on the same Bible as Ibrahim Lincoln used in his Inauguration of 1861. President Obama was a glimpse of hope for the African-American community. Most of them saw that their fight for equality and to live safe from the hostility of the police would be eliminated, and their situation would improve. It was a turning point as it signaled the beginning of a

new way of thinking about themselves as Americans, one that broke decades of entrenched pessimism about what might be accomplished in the country to which they had been compelled to contribute so much and from which they had learned to get so little (Beatrice 168).

Barak Hussein Obama was born on August 4, 1961. Honolulu, Hawaii. He worked as a community organizer in Chicago after graduating from Columbia University in 1983. From 1992 through 2004, he worked as a civil rights attorney and taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School. The political race began when he represented the 13th district in the Illinois Senate from 1997 until 2004 as the U.S. Senate. He was nominated for the presidency by the Democratic Party in 2008, a year after launching his campaign and following a close primary race against Hillary Clinton. Obama was elected alongside his running partner Joe Biden after defeating Republican contender John McCain in the general election. He was named the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Before he runs for the presidency, Michelle Obama asked Obama why he would run for the presidency he replied “kids all around this country — Black kids, Hispanic kids, kids who don’t fit in — they’ll see themselves differently, too, their horizons lifted, their possibilities expanded. And that alone ... that would be worth it” (qtd. in Claude 32).

During a speech in his campaign in 2008, Obama talked about the history of racism in the government to win the African-American voters at the same time he calmed the whites that he is the president of all Americans. There was hope that Obama's election might alter the path of circumstances. Even before Obama's election, there was a lot of excitement about what a Black president may do for racial politics in the United States. In 2008, there were two million more African-American voters than in 2004 and, the presidential election saw the largest turnout in a presidential election since 1968, with 64 percent of eligible Black voters voting, and 68 percent of eligible African American women voters. But Obama the candidate was very different from Obama the president according to some events that happened during his terms (Keeanga 33).

3.3.2. African-American Disappointment

African-Americans who voted for Obama as a president hoped that one man from their folk could at least make some change for his own people and bring some justice for the victims of the white systems. But their hope was broken. An event that happened to Troy Davis changed the African-American point of view of their president. Troy Davis was a Black man sentenced to the death penalty in Georgia. He was widely thought to have been falsely convicted, and he was facing execution in the fall of 2011 for a murder he had not committed. As the international movement to stop Davis's execution took form, there were rallies all around the world, and support from; world leaders, The European Union, the governments of France and Germany, as well as Amnesty International and former FBI Director William Sessions, in which they pleaded the US to suspend his execution. But President Barack Obama refused to halt the execution or to use his authority as president to fight for African Americans. He stated that “it’s not appropriate for the president to intervene in a state-led prosecution” (qtd. in Keeanga 37).

Another event happened out of many during Obama’s administration that revealed that he was a black president for a white racist system. The death of Trayvon Martin a black kid killed by a white police officer did not stir Obama’s emotions at all. He addressed the nation after the police were freed from charges saying; “But we are a nation of laws, and a jury has spoken. We should ask ourselves, as individuals and as a society, how we can prevent future tragedies like this. As citizens, that’s a job for all of us” (qt in Keeanga 41). He forgot that this nation has two systems of laws one for whites and the other for African Americans.

During his term, Barak Obama signed many acts and bills such as the State Children's Health Insurance Program to cover an additional four million uninsured children and the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010 that allowed gay and lesbian people from serving openly in the United States Armed Forces. Obama presented himself as the president of the

United States of America for all Americans not only African American community but he did nothing to support the black community or eliminate the racial treatment toward its people (Michael 12).

3.3.3. Obama Birtherism

President Barack Obama was also a victim of racism because of his skin color. During his 2008 presidential campaign, there was widespread news coverage of Obama's religion and birthplace in which they questioned his citizenship. Since the year Washington took office, the legal criteria for presidential candidates have remained unchanged. The constitution of the United States in Article II, Section 1, Clause 5 stated that to be eligible for the presidency, you must be born in the United States territories (William 63). Donald Trump was one of the prominent promoters of birther conspiracy theories, Trump was a billionaire and a TV celebrity and served as the 45th president of the United States from 2017 to 2021. After the election of Obama as President, Trump led a movement called the Birthers in which they questioned Obama's eligibility to run for the presidency because according to the movement "Obama was not a natural-born citizen of the United States". Their main goal was to spread the idea that President Obama was not a natural-born citizen of the United States, implying that he was unqualified to be president under US law either of political self-interest or racism legacy. They declared that Obama was born in Kenya to an Arabian African father and his mother bought him to Hawaii to register his birth while others said that he was born in Indonesia (Nicholas 25). At the Conservative Political Action Conference in February 2011, Donald Trump said "Our current president came out of nowhere, came out of nowhere ... The people who went to school with him—they never saw him; they don't know who he is" (qt. in Catherine 44). After Trump repeatedly asked Obama to show his birth certificate on The View an American Talk Show, finally Obama released his Hawaiiin "long-birth" certificate on April 27, 2012. A decision that closed the debate of whether Obama is eligible for the United States Presidency or not. Even with the long-birth certificate that shows Obama was born in Hawaii, Trump is still suspicious about

it (Catherine 44).

3.4. The Rise of the Black Lives Matter Movement

A 17-year-old African-American youth, called Trayvon Martin was visiting family on the night of February 26, 2012, in Sanford, Florida, United States. Where Zimmerman, a 28-year-old mixed-race man, was the neighborhood watch of his gated community. Before the shooting incident happened Zimmerman called 911 to report a suspicious guy walking around the neighbors then he yelled that the person is running. After the emergency call ended Zimmerman followed Martin and they started a physical fight before Zimmerman decided to end the fight with a deadly shot using a gun. One of the Sanford Police officers arrived at the scene and reported that Zimmerman, with his back wet and bleeding head, was found standing near Martin, who was lifeless and lying face down in the grass. Officer handcuffed him and took his gun as evidence (Sandford Police Department). Zimmerman was arrested and questioned the night of the incident. Police documented his injuries and collected gunshot residue. The weapon used by Zimmerman was taken into evidence. Zimmerman was released five hours later as his act was self-defense. On April 11, 2012, George Zimmerman was charged with second-degree murder in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, but the decision of this charge by the jury shocked the black community. On July 13th, 2013, the jury believed that the act of Zimmerman was an act of Self-defence and he is not guilty of the second-degree murder of the seventeen years old Trayvon Martin (Kenneth et al. 85).

People who sympathized with Martin's death found another way to demonstrate their frustration about the verdict. They gathered in New York, Tallahassee, Chicago, and other major cities to protest peacefully. Students at over a dozen Florida high schools organized walkouts to demand Zimmerman's arrest. While other demonstrators gathered in several major cities, holding signs that said "Justice for Trayvon" or "No Justice, No Peace!". Martin's mother started a petition seeking Zimmerman's arrest, which received over 2.2 million signatures. While civil rights groups such as The National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have started an online petition and sent a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder urging the Department of Justice to file civil rights charges against George Zimmerman, who was acquitted of killing unarmed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin on Saturday night, in support of this petition. Within three days, 1.5 million signatures had been collected. There were also some acts of violence following the verdict in some cities where some police cars were vandalized, breaking windows, and burning American flags were (David and Richard 200).

After the final verdict of George Zimmerman, three female Black organizers called Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi decided to create a movement. They called their movement Black lives Matter which is a global organization that aims to bring attention to the racism, oppression, and unfairness that black people face while at the same time eradicating white supremacy. Black lives Matter advocates for a variety of policy changes linked to black emancipation. The organization started in the first place as a hashtag #BlacklivesMatter on social media such as Twitter and Facebook into a real civil rights movement after George Zimmerman was found not guilty in the February 2012 shooting death of African-American teenager Trayvon Martin. The organization grew nationally after another two shots at black males. The first was called Michael Brown 18 years old black man who was fatally shot by Darren Wilson, a 28-year-old white police officer in the city of Ferguson, Missouri whose population represents 67.4 percent of African Americans. The incident happened when Wilson a police officer stopped and charged him after a short pursuit. Wilson, according to Brown's friend, started a confrontation by grabbing his brown neck through his car window and threatening him. While Wilson stated that Brown was hidden a gun and was about to use it, he shot him Twelve bullets as an act of self-defense. The investigation reported that Brown was unarmed. After five months of reviewing the case, St. Louis prosecutor, Wesley Bell charged the police officer Wilson with the murder of Brown but he announced later in July that he won't charge Wilson due to lack of evidence and that Wilson acted in self-defense

(Masaki 207).

The second victim was Eric Garner after two months after the death of Michael Brown. Eric was a black male aged 44 years old at the time of his death. The accident was famous for protests “I can’t Breathe” and became a slogan for the Black Lives Matter movement, the incident encouraged the movement to do more efforts in order to send their voice around the globe. Eric Garner was standing on a sidewalk in Staten Island, New York when two white police officers approached. They accused Garner, a black man, of selling unlicensed cigarettes which are considered illegal and could lead to a penalty of 2000 dollars in fines according to New York tax laws. The police arrived at Eric and tried to arrest him but Eric was out of bail and resisted his arrest, Eric spoke to the police officers while they standing in front of him "Every time you see me, you want to arrest me," Garner told the arresting cops. I'm fed up with it. This will come to an end today... I'm taking care of my own business, officer. "Just leave me alone". One of the police officers called Pantaleo approached him from behind and put his arm around Eric's neck. With the help of the other three police, they put him on the ground with his face down, Eric start yelling that he could not breathe, it was all taped on video. Eric Garner passed away after one hour on July 14, 2014. News stations picked up a witness's cell phone video of the arrest and a lot of people shared it widely on social media, causing outrage and sadness across the country. Report on autopsy found that Officer Pantaleo was undoubtedly a factor in Eric Garner's death, as he died from compression of his neck and chest during physical restraint by police but after a while, the autopsy further declared that Garner died of bronchial asthma, obesity, and heart disease, according to the autopsy report. No one really knows the exact cause of Eric's death. In December 2014, six months after Garner's death, a grand jury determined not to indict Pantaleo, claiming a lack of evidence of wrongdoing (Behnke 108).

This decision sparked public protests and rallies, with people accusing police of abuse. On December 28, 2014, at least 50 protests were staged across the country in response to the Garner case, while hundreds of protests against police brutality, in general, used Garner as a

focal point. Although the officers did not plan to kill Garner, and a takedown may be warranted when a suspect resists arrest, no one should die for selling untaxed cigarettes or even for resisting arrest. The officer used a chokehold, which is banned by NYPD policy (Heather 18).

Large protests in the name of Black Lives Matter erupted in response to these killings, as well as prosecutors' unwillingness to press charges against the cops, capturing national and worldwide attention. Black Lives Matter from hashtags to worldwide organizations that seek to improve the black community. The name Black Lives Matter symbolizes both a condemnation of unjust police killings of Black people (Black people are far more likely to be killed by cops in the United States than white people) and a demand that society value Black people's lives and humanity as much as it values white people's lives and humanity.

3.5 Racism And Bias Against African Americans

3.5.1. Employment

Discrimination in hiring has long been a problem for African-Americans. The unemployment rate for black Americans was 6.7 percent, while that for white Americans was 3.5 percent. The difference is even more obvious among men. According to Valerie Wilson, director of the Economic Policy Institute's Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy, occupational segregation has made it more difficult for Black Americans to work remotely during lockdowns. Many African-American workers were offered the option of staying in employment with higher dangers or determining that the risk was not worth it. Moreover, a study was made in 2017, showing that Black Americans who delete racial references from their resumes are twice as likely to get interviews. Following the major protests following the murder of George Floyd in the summer of 2020, several companies promised to examine their hiring processes and focus on diverse recruitment (Lauren), but the racial gap in the

unemployment rate remained.

3.5.2. Healthcare

Despite the fact that disparities in health coverage for Black people have lessened since the Affordable Care Act's implementation, they continue to have greater rates of disease and mortality than White people. Black people are also more likely to confront discrimination and encounter hurdles to access care for themselves or a family member. Inequities outside of the healthcare system, such as poverty, food insecurity, and family wealth, have a negative impact on Black families' health.

According to a recent national survey conducted by The Undefeated and the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), 7 in 10 African Americans believe that patients are treated unfairly based on their race or ethnicity. Hence the results showed a gap between white and African Americans. So compared to white people about four out of ten Black adults reported knowing someone who had died from the coronavirus. In addition, due to the pandemic, one-third of Black individuals and nearly half of Black parents are having financial difficulties. Since the pandemic began in February, two out of every three Black parents have either lost their employment or had their earnings stopped (Haas). This demonstrates that most African Americans don't have healthcare coverage or the money to pay for it.

3.6. Racial Double Standard

3.6.1. Kyle Rittenhouse Case

There is no doubt that racism still exists in the 21st century in the United States and there are some laws that are applied to Black people only. For example, the case of Kyle Rittenhouse proves that and many other incidents that happened for decades. On August 25, 2020, a 17 years old white teenager called Kyle Rittenhouse from Antioch, Illinois fatally shot two persons and wounded another in Kenosha, Wisconsin. The accident happened during the rioting and civil unrest of Black Lives Matter that followed the shooting of a black man, Jacob Blake, by a white police officer. Rittenhouse was armed with an AR-15-style semi-automatic weapon and had joined a group of armed men in

Kenosha who claimed to be there to protect businesses from the riots. Because after the peaceful protests in Kenosha, it turned to violence when demonstrators, armed civilians, and others clashed with one another and the police late at night. Rittenhouse was pursued into a parking lot by Joseph Rosenbaum, a 36-year-old Kenosha man who grasped the barrel of his weapon. Rittenhouse fired four close-range shots at Rosenbaum after that one of the crowd called Silver Lake started following Rittenhouse then he hits him with his skateboard Rittenhouse fell down and shot Silver in his chest then he shot another one but he survived. Rittenhouse stood up and walked towards the police officers, his hands raised and the gun slung over his chest. He was repeatedly requested to get off the road, and when he refused, one police attempted to pepper-spray him. A number of witnesses and demonstrators had called for Rittenhouse's arrest. When questioned why Rittenhouse was not stopped during a news conference, Kenosha Sheriff David Beth stated, "In high-stress situations, you have such tremendous tunnel vision", implying authorities may not have known he was engaged in the shooting.

During the trial, several police officers testified that they were responding to an active shooter situation and did not realize Rittenhouse was the gunman. Many people were outraged when a short video was shared on social media in which the video showed policemen appearing to ignore Kyle Rittenhouse, drawing comparisons to the same police department's inhuman treatment of Jacob Blake just days before (McEvoy). Kyle Rittenhouse was charged with two counts of homicide, one count of attempted homicide, two counts of reckless endangerment, one count of unlawful possession of a firearm, and one count of curfew violation. His lawyer claimed the affirmative defense of self-defense during his trial, which lasted from November 1 to November 19, 2021. But the jury dropped all charges against Rittenhouse and was released (Todd). "What if Rittenhouse was a black kid?" this was a hypothetical question asked by many people who noticed a double standard treatment of the law enforcement between having black and white skin. Wrote Tabitha in an article stating that Black children are more than four times as likely as their white

counterparts to be detained or committed in juvenile facilities such as residential treatment centers, group homes, and youth jails. She answered the question if Rittenhouse was a black kid with an accident that happened to a black kid called Tamir Rice, Tamir E. Rice, a 12-year-old African-American boy, was holding a replica toy gun in a park located in Cleveland, Ohio. The people who were at the park on November 22, 2014, called the 911 emergency number to report that there was a boy pointing a gun at random people. One of the police officers called Timothy Loehmann arrived at the scene when he found a Tamir holding a replica toy gun. According to the police reports, the police officer asked Tamir to show him his hands but the little boy pointed the toy gun toward the police as if he playing with them, but the police had a different idea and that the boy was trying to shoot them they immediately shot him down although the person he reported the 911 told them that the gun could be a toy gun. She continued criticizing the system saying that racism sits in the highest seats in our authorities since Tamir was not treated like Rittenhouse either by law enforcement or the judges who were being Rittenhouse treated like a grandson that he had done nothing (Tabitha).

3.6.2. Capitol Riots vs. Black Lives Matters

Capitol Riots started when Democrat Joe Biden defeated Republican Donald Trump in the 2020 United States presidential election. On the 8th of December 2020, former President Donald Trump called his supporters to organize a protestation before January 6, 2021; he alleged fraud even though there were still some votes did not being counted. Trump attempted to alter the election results by filing at least sixty lawsuits (Gary 23). A meet jointly was scheduled by Congress on January 6, 2021, to count votes and declared the candidate of the Democratic Party as the 46th President of the United States. Trump's supporters arrived by the tens of thousands predominantly White, carrying guns, waving Trump and Confederate flags alongside their Stars and Stripes, determined to prevent Congress from officially recording Biden's victory in an election Trump claims was manipulated. Hundreds of hastily summoned D.C. police joined the few hundred Capitol

Police stationed outside the complex, but the cops were rapidly overwhelmed when several hundred rioters pushed through low crowd-control stands and raced up the stone stairs. After that, rioters managed later to penetrate the Capitol including the armed civilian group Oath Keepers, a 60-year-old gun-rights activist from Arkansas. They did not find any resistance from the Capitol guardians, they walked the halls freely, taking photographs and grabbing souvenirs, destroying doors and defacing statues, all while chanting "Hang Mike Pence!". The police officers that were in the Capitol could not halt the Trump's supporters and many officers were shoved and beaten, with one of them dying later. A police statement said that at least 58 other officers were injured (Lori and Tomislav 106).

Black lives Matter Protestors were treated differently when they protested peacefully after the killing of George Floyd by a white police officer. A similar-sized gathering assembled outside the White House on June 1, 2020, to protest against the brutality of police officer Derek Chauvin, demanding justice. The first three days were peaceful protests but after that, they turned to violence and damage protests. It happened when law enforcement and shield-bearing riot officers started violently routing the gathered without any provocation from them. Protesters hopped through barricades set up near the nearby Treasury building while Trump and his family were led away to the White House's secret bunker. Trump criticized state and local officials as "weak" and promised to ramp up the reaction to the disturbance in Washington. In a telephone conversation with governors and police enforcement, Trump said, "We're going to do something that people haven't seen before" and he declared that if local authorities were unable to recapture the city, he would. After the protestors approached the White House, his administration ordered a massive and militarized reaction, with law enforcement from a variety of federal agencies. There was a meeting between local authorities to end the protest. Before the curfew that was imposed by District Mayor on June 1st, crowds were moved by police officers wearing gear riot. One of the officers called through the speakers for the crowds to disperse but it seemed that they did not hear him within a second, chemical grenades were rolled into the crowds. The peaceful

crowd was being attacked by the police using batons and pepper sprayers. During the attack on the police officers, Donald Trump said “I am dispatching thousands and thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel, and law enforcement officers to stop the rioting, looting, vandalism, assaults, and the wanton destruction of property” (qtd. in Carlos 210).

The same night, D. C police detained a total of 289 persons, many of whom were charged with curfew violations that were later dropped. Hundreds of police officers moved groups of demonstrators through the streets. Military vehicles were stationed at crossroads throughout the city, obstructing traffic. While the protests of the Capitol riots only charged less than 75 people and identified 170 suspects after an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in which the police officers used no violence or tear gas against Trump supporters. That shows the double standard in the United States in treatment between the African Americans and the whites (Julie 50).

3.7. Conclusion

Within this chapter, we have seen a radical change in the history of the United States, a change that marked the history of the nation. Although obstacles and biased treatment followed the America-decent by the white system, they succeeded in many areas and proved to white supremacy that they have equal capabilities to achieve wherever they want.

African Americans became more confident since the 44th president was black and thought that Barack Obama could save them from all aspects of racism but they were wrong since one black man can't change a legacy and system of centuries in a few years. Even the president himself experienced racial treatment from his opponents because of his skin color.

Despite all the achievements of the African Americans, they still experience racial discrimination and are treated differently in comparison to the White people. Having black skin means that they are likely to be shot without any reason. African Americans still experience some indirect segregation and a new form of Jim Crow laws.

General Conclusion

The discovery of the new world by Christopher Columbus was like finding a haven for the European countries and for their people some of them were repressed in their home countries either by the Church or the crown while others sought to be rich. While for Africans or enslaved people, for them it was the beginning of their suffering and hardship. However, the journey to the new world by the transatlantic trade was an awful experience for those who survived a long exhausting journey in ships that could last up to 6 months in conditions that were not even suitable for animals. The arrival of enchained slaves ashore was welcomed by white people who wanted to buy them as products and push them to work hard in the plantation fields for long hours. The male slaves were living in a small hut sometimes with their families, while female slaves were working in both plantation fields and in the house of the master who most of the time abused them. After establishing a nation called the United States of America, the Black slaves endured terrible conditions of living and were treated as animals. After a long conflict between the two sections, the enslaved black people were freed from slavery under the constitution. Although African Americans were finally free from their misery, some southern states segregated them and the whites and restrict their liberty through the so-called Black Codes and Jim Crow laws.

The situation for African Americans was horrible during the era of those laws. African Americans were seen as inferior to white thus they should be separated from the white in schools, public space, and even in hospitals. Consequently, they started to rise against them and demand the elimination of segregation. From lawsuits, marches, and sit-ins to civil movements African-Americans did everything to stop segregation and have equal rights. Although, they succeeded to a noticeable degree in their struggle for equality and they finally became able to practice their citizenship and their voting right due to the Civil Right Act of 1965, racial discrimination is still practiced against them in the present day. African

Americans still suffer racial discrimination, especially from the American criminal justice system. The legacy of white supremacy exists in the judicial system of the United States in which a black boy is viewed as older, less innocent than a white boy, and is likely to get shot because of his color skin. A legacy that is instilled in the society and very difficult to be eradicated, even a black person in the highest status in authority could not change. Despite the daily struggle of African-Americans either individually or by movements to eliminate racial inequities and to bring justice, they could not achieve full equality for their black community. Until now, police are still committing violence against black people.

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