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Introduction

The reconstruction period of the south began after the end of the civil war in 1863 to 1877. The reconstruction was started by the radical republican leaders who wanted to abolish slavery and wanted to unite the nation.

President Abraham Lincoln wanted the reconstruction to happen at a faster rate so as to unify the people after the civil wars. He started the ten percent plan which went into effect in some states. This plan was not approved by the radical republicans. This brought about the formation of the Wade Davis bill in 1864 which was considered to be harsher than the previous plan (McPherson, 1992).

There were many methods the white southerners used after the civil wars to make the exercise of freedom challenging for the former slaves. They used the legal system where they formed the black codes in 1865. This code limited the progress of the black people in education and economically. This made the black community to be in debt to the white tenants and also made them very poor. The codes also prevented the interracial marriages; they did not allow free speech especially in Mississippi and in some states it did not allow unemployment thus giving the landowners ammunition to threaten to evict the tenants. These codes were made so that the whites could control the increment of political influence especially in states such as South Carolina where the black people population was more than that of the whites.

The white southerners formed the white supremacist organization called the Ku Klux Klan in Tennessee 1866. This organization terrorized the black communities by beating, lynching, burning houses, raping, hanging and

whipping (Morgan, 2013). Some of the occasions where they scared the blacks were during the elections. This organization did not get support from President Johnson but got support from President Gant. In 1871 the Ku Klux Klan act was formulated in order to help protect the black's community. The share cropping system was also made that did not benefit the black population instead it made them poorer. In this system the landowners were to divide their piece of land and share or rent with the freed black people. The black or shared land people were to do farm and give a certain percentage to the land owners. The share cropping made the blacks to be tied down to the landowners thus ended up being indebted. The formation of the Jim Crow laws in 1877 was used to separate the whites and the blacks. This is what showed how the whites were superior to the blacks. In this law the blacks and whites were to not eat in the same restaurant or go to the same schools.

Some of the actions taken were the formation of the freedman bureau which handled all the affairs to do with the freed people. This bureau was able to make the black codes be abolished in 1866 (Hyman, 1967). This also brought about the sharecropping system and thus stopped the gang labor work pattern. This enabled the black community to acquire lands. The blacks formed riots so as to stop the segregation such as Memphis riots where some women explained their distress on sexual harassments and rape by the whites. The freed African Americans formed civil rights movements which would help them fight for their rights. These movements were faced with a lot of challenges because of the constant attacks of the black community by the white's paramilitary organizations.

During the reconstruction period the whites were threatened by the new rules which freed the slaves and thus made them have rights over politics and also military power. Therefore, the whites formed the democratic and conservative party which fought for their rights. Through the white paramilitary organizations such as the red shirts and the white league they were able to control the voting process in areas that was filled with black people. This made it easy for their people to win elections especially in the South. This meant that they could have full control over the government. They made legislative changes in the constitution by introducing the literacy tests and poll taxes which became a barrier for most black and non white citizens to vote. This was done in 1890 to around 1908. The last black person post reconstruction to be a congressman was in 1901 named as George Henry White and left leaving only white people in charge. The redeemers are the once responsible for the ending of the reconstruction era. The federal troops left the south and left it to be controlled by the white southerners (Perman, 2001). When it comes to socially the white southerners were in full control over the labor force. This made it really hard for the blacks and the non whites to get decent jobs even if they are well educated. Due to these injustices W. E. B. Du Bois commented that the black people might have been freed but they went back to slavery. This statement is true because the white southerners controlled their every movement through the Jim Crow policy. The Jim Crow ensured that the whites were superior therefore making the blacks and non whites to be second class citizens.

In the 19th century, the 13th amendment was formulated in the constitution which enabled the slaves to be freed. This amendment made

sure that slavery in the country was abolished or banned. The formation of the fourteenth amendments made it possible for the freed people to acquire civil rights almost as equal as that of the whites such as voting. This made it possible for the blacks and non whites to vote for their leaders especially in the reconstruction era. Due to the increment of the white paramilitary organizations especially in the South the government formulated the fifteenth amendments which would protect the voters to vote without any harassment. Through the formation of the Jim Crow policy by the legislation it made it possible for the whites to be one whiles the blacks and non whites to be together. This is because they were discriminated by the whites and treated the same way. The poll tax and literacy tests were formed to intimidate the voters.

When the Jim Crow policy came into effect in the 19th century it brought about racial discrimination that has never being recovered in America even today. In the 20th century there were fights to stop this policy which ended in 1965 (Perman, 2001). The end of this policy led to the struggle for civil rights in the United States especially in the South. Some white people in United States still believe that they are superior to the black people thus continue to terrorize them. This kind of attacks is minimal but it is still there. The Aryan brotherhood is considered to be an organization formed by the white supremacy. This organization has many followers all over America. The blacks were made poor by not being given jobs in the 19th century. Poverty is still being experienced by black people in the modern society. This is because they are still not given better jobs compared to the white people.

Funding for schools and other needs is still minimal in the lower class citizens compared to the upper class citizens which are mostly white populated.

Conclusion

The reconstruction era brought about racial segregation after the civil wars. The white population believed because the blacks were slaves then therefore, they are not equals in any right. This brought about the formation of redeemers who were white southerners. They found ways to ensure that the government was made up of the white democrats. Organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, the white league and red shirt were formed to fight, kill, torture, rape, lynch and burn houses of the black and other minorities (Morgan, 2013). These attacks were experienced more during the elections periods. New laws were formulated like the literacy tests and poll taxes to prevent blacks from voting. The Jim Crow laws were also formulated to separate the whites and the blacks in the United States. Racial segregation is still being experienced in America today.

Reference

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