

Discussion of this period, slavery was institutionally



Discussion

Institutionalized racism was powerful in the history of the US for many reasons. This concept was a norm in the US society. Norms are widely agreed practices, procedures or customs.

Institutionalized racism is not a pattern that is viewed unusual. Racial stratification continues to be maintained in the US. American society is arranged into classes. The country uses race as one of the means uses race ideology to stratify. This paper provides a historical account of institutionalized racism in the United States from the 1850s through the civil war up to the repeal of Jim Crow laws (Loewen 18). It discusses: Institutionalized racism through Jim Crow; institutionalized racism through White Supremacy enforced by government; and racial segregation and Civil rights Movement.

Institutionalized Racism through Jim Crow Laws

In 1850s, treaties were established to annex Native Americans lands for settlement of white Americans. White Americans from the East were encouraged by government to settle in these lands. As a result, great influx of settlers and migrant workers in these lands was witnessed. At the start of this period, slavery was institutionally legal.

However, the end of Civil War in 1865 was followed by emancipation of slaves proclamation same period. New state governments were quickly established in the South after Civil War. These governments moved fast in 1865-66 to enact “black codes” legislation which ensured that whites continued to enjoy special preferences and accommodation (Loewen 16).

These laws were however negated by the passing of the 14th Amendment in 1868 and the 15th Amendment in 1870. The 14th Amendment accorded slaves with citizenship, whereas 15th Amendment outlawed discrimination in terms of race (Better 20). The Southern states managed to enact Jim Crow laws in 1877 to segregate and disenfranchise the blacks. These laws denied African Americans voting rights, a situation that went on until 1965 when Voting Rights Act was enacted. Jim Crow laws entrenched segregation of blacks.

Governments in the South used violence and terror to enforce segregation in the early part of the century. The period 1890 and 1920 saw lynching of many black Americans in the South.

Institutionalized Racism through White Supremacy Enforced by government (1900-1944)

All white Americans assumed and universally acknowledged white supremacy over black people during 1900-1944 periods. The scientific perspectives of the 19th and 20th advocated for the supremacy of white race (Loewen 98). American leadership at this period absorbed white supremacy into laws and institutions. They also incorporated this supremacy in daily interactions of white and black people. Even the decisions of the high court at the turn of the century attested and encouraged this white superiority attitude. The issue of race was entrenched in American national character in terms of cultural, social and moral underpinnings (Better 16).

The race factor was functional in the US during the period 1900-44. Anybody with white skin was seen superior to anybody with dark or black skin due to

the race construct. Whites were offered power, privileges, and immunity determined solely by skin colour.

The American government recognized, preserved and enforced racial differences in her systems. Contravention or violation of white supremacy during this period was responded with jail, assault, mutilation or death. The law that governed America fully advocated for racial exclusion (Better 16).

Racial Segregation and Civil rights Movement (1944-70)

The period 1944-1970 witnessed close of World War II and the beginning of cold war. Vietnam War and policing of Korean Peninsula characterized American defense for democracy against communist supremacy.

Segregation was rampant during this period. War veterans from the black community who had risked their lives for the sake of the nation began to agitate for equality (Loewen 98).

It is then that civil rights efforts started to take root and brutality was used over time to stop these efforts. Multiple murders of prominent leaders, activists and children were committed at the time. Out of frustration, blacks lashed out violent riots to counter the situation. Institutionalized racism was figured out in these pertinent events in this period: separation of blood donations from blacks and whites by the Red Cross in 1940s; 1942-46 internment of Japanese citizens in America; black protests in Detroit against poor housing conditions and segregation of black defence forces in 1943; office end of segregation in the military by President Truman in 1948; unconstitutional declaration of the doctrine of separation (Brown vs. Board of

Education) by Supreme Court in 1954; 1955 marked start of bus boycotts in Montgomery; passage of 1964 Civil Rights Act; and others (Loevy 1987).

Conclusion

In sum, institutionalized racism provides good example of policies, procedure and practices. These policies enhance inequality by using race as a constraint to full participation in American society.

For instance, distribution of housing in the US throughout her history has been crucial in maintaining inequalities in racial groups. Native Americans were not allowed to live near European settlements.

Work Cited

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