

# BLACK CODES AND JIM CROW

Unit IV: The Civil War and Reconstruction

# PREDICTIONS

What will different groups do to help or harm  
newly freed African Americans?

- Northerners
- Southerners
- Republicans
- Democrats
- Wealthy
- Poor
- Previously freed slaves

# 40 ACRES AND A MULE: $\frac{1}{2}$ TRUTH



Radical Republicans encouraged the idea newly freed families would receive “40 acres and a mule”

Slaves who fought for Union also expected this

Means of **agrarian (land) reform** – redistribution of land, especially after military control of south

\*Land grants were common in the 1700-1800's unlike today where property ownership is privatized and difficult.

# 40 ACRES AND A MULE: TRUTH

William T. Sherman issued **Special Field Order no. 15** on 1/16/1865

- Bands of freed slaves followed the army around for aid
- Sherman needed to “get them away”
- Proposes to Lincoln a plan to give captured land to slaves
- Later says blacks can borrow mules from the army

Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, radical republicans, push this idea

Once Lincoln is assassinated, land is given back to the very people who declared war on the United States and the black refugees must find a new home (north/cities)

# ERIC FONER – LEADING HISTORIAN

“Here in coastal South Carolina and Georgia, the prospect beckoned of a transformation of Southern society more radical even than the end of slavery.” Try to imagine how profoundly different the history of race relations in the United States would have been had this policy been implemented and enforced; had the former slaves actually had access to the ownership of land, of property; if they had had a chance to be self-sufficient economically, to build, accrue and pass on wealth. After all, one of the principal promises of America was the possibility of average people being able to own land, and all that such ownership entailed. As we know all too well, this promise was not to be realized for the overwhelming majority of the nation’s former slaves, who numbered about 3.9 million.

# FREEDMAN'S BUREAU

US Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (1865)

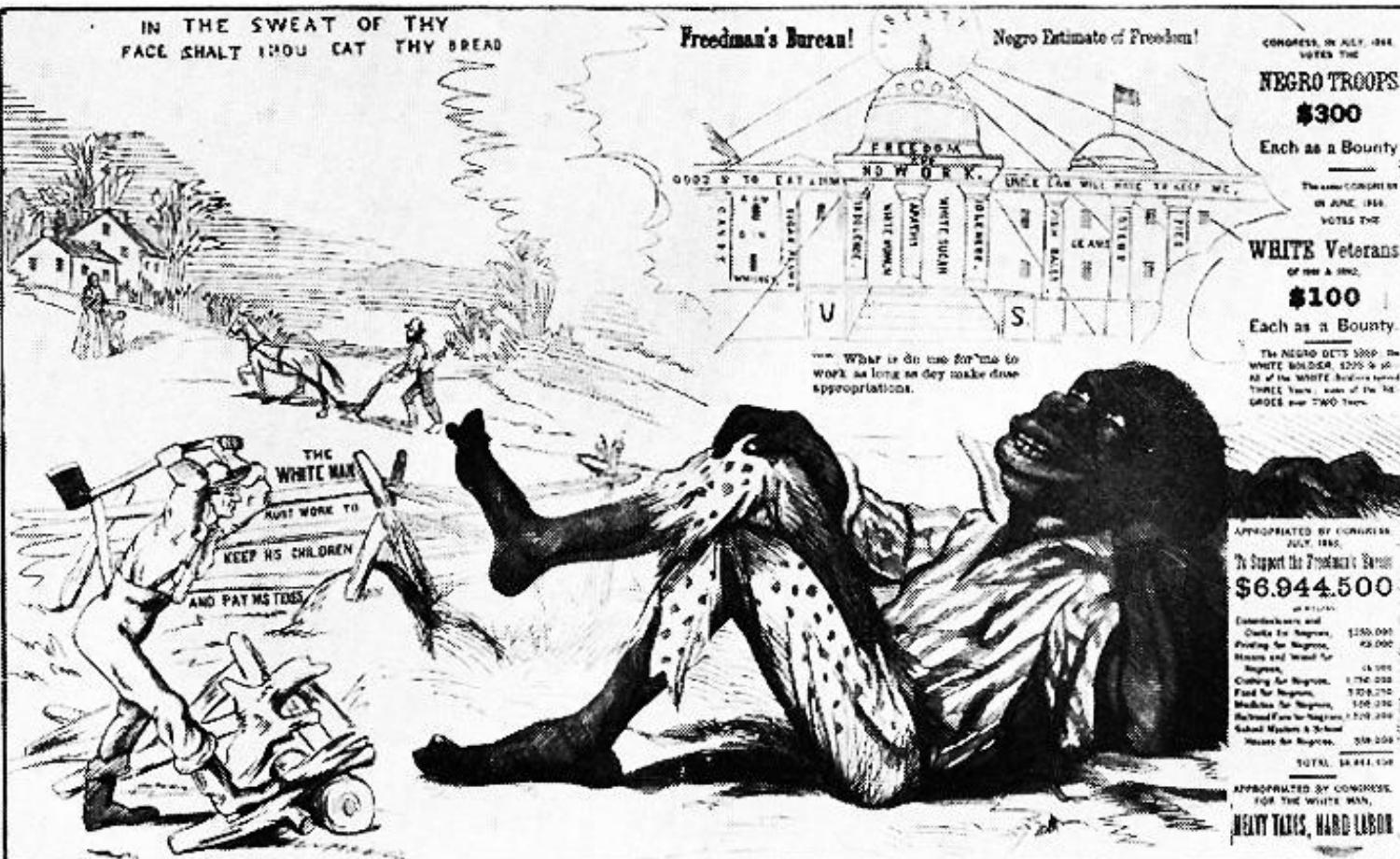
**Mission:** Assist newly freed slaves and poor whites after the Civil War

- -Legal assistance
- -Housing
- -Food
- -Medical Aid
- -Established Schools
- -Legalize marriages
- -Reunite Families

But for how long?  
And who will pay  
for it?

# THE FREEDMAN'S BUREAU!

AN AGENCY TO KEEP THE **NEGRO** IN IDLENESS AT THE **EXPENSE** OF THE WHITE MAN.  
TWICE VETOED BY THE **PRESIDENT**, AND MADE A LAW BY **CONGRESS**.  
**SUPPORT CONGRESS & YOU SUPPORT THE NEGRO. SUSTAIN THE PRESIDENT & YOU PROTECT THE WHITE MAN**



For 1864 and 1865, the **FREEDMAN'S BUREAU** cost the Tax-payers of the Nation, at least **TWENTY-FIVE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS**. For 1866, THE SHARE of the Tax-payers of Pennsylvania will be about **ONE MILLION OF DOLLARS**. **GEARY** is FOR the Freedman's Bureau. **CLYMER** is OPPOSED to it.

# BLACK CODES

Southern state governments began passing “**Black Codes**”

Based off previous slave codes

Controlled the behavior of freedmen:

- Forbid them from gathering in large groups
- Owning weapons
- Holding certain jobs
- Owning or renting property.

In addition, freedmen who were jobless could be arrested as vagrants and sold off to plantation owners who paid their fines.

These laws were designed to limit the freedom of newly freed African Americans, give plantation owners a source of labor, and guarantee white supremacy.

# BATTLING THE AMENDMENTS

## **Poll Taxes – A tax in order to vote**

- African Americans, often poor, could sometimes not afford the tax

## **Literacy Test – Mandatory tests taken in order to vote**

- Designed to be difficult
- Freed slaves had no real formal schooling
- Established schools had few resources to teach with

## **Grandfather Clause – Exempted those who had grandparents or parents that were allowed to vote in 1866 or 1867 from paying poll tax or taking literacy test**

- Clear loophole
- Negated the existence of poll taxes/literacy tests for whites

# KU KLUX KLAN

Established in 1866

Primary goal – fight against Republican Reconstruction

Use of intimidation and violence – terrorism to be exact

Branches in all southern states by 1870

- Highly organized hierarchy

*There was Ed an' Tindy, who before the war belonged to Mr Lynch an' after the war he told them to move. He gives them a month and they ain't gone, so the Ku Kluxes gets them. It was on a cold night when they came and dragged the niggers out of bed. They carried them down in the woods an' whup them, then they throws them in the pond, their bodies breakin' the ice. Ed comes out an' come to our house, but Tindy ain't been seen since.*

-Eyewitnesstohistory.com



# KU KLUX KLAN

It still exists today...

Consider the following:



# EXIT SLIP

*"We have very dark days here. The colored people are in despair. The rebels boast that the Negroes shall not have as much liberty now as they had under slavery. If things go on thus, our doom is sealed. God knows it is worse than slavery."*

Write a brief response explaining why this freed slave felt this way during Reconstruction