



# RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION



## The Hidden Story

By: Brian Taylor



The Civil War ended chattel slavery  
and opened the door for a new  
political period in the United States.  
A period where racism should have  
been and could have been eradicated  
and relegated to a thing of the past



There are so many inspiring stories to read about the role Black people played in the Civil War, the tremendous military boom we gave when we entered. The genius of Black women who scouted terrains. The heroic deliveries of arms and supplies. But that's a tale for another exhibit.



Why did racism continue past its initial purpose and survive the abolition of chattel slavery?

Who perpetuates racism and benefits from its existence?



Many believe slavery is at the heart of the racism we see today. Most of us understand the timeline as: slavery, civil war, then society as we know it with Black Wall Street and Tulsa massacres weaved in, then the Civil Rights movement and now.

But an important piece is missing...



The Tulsa Massacre of 1921 tends to be the main story we know something about. It is an example of a Black middle class emerging and being violently put down.



But the stage of THAT smaller defeat had been set by a much larger and more significant defeat. And THAT is what we will explore here.



It was after Black people and their allies rose up and ENDED slavery through a victory in the Civil War, that our modern plight begins.



Black people together with progressive whites and others began building radical governments in the South that demanded the use of resources the rich saw as theirs to carry out massive reforms.



## Video Clips from “Reconstruction: The 2nd Civil War

<https://youtu.be/O-wTzZvVb-c?si=AQxyYusbGEoneIW7>

0:00 – 1:20

<https://youtu.be/6Ge90PXpgg0?si=0n8DhUJb66nBGDQa&t=134>

2:15 – 3:00

<https://youtu.be/6Ge90PXpgg0?si=vDSF8VczCn6JwmU8&t=2785>

46:25 – end



The reforms being carried out were expanding. This included some of the FIRST public schools, hospitals, land redistribution, material aid to freed slaves and poor white farmers. This alliance between Blacks and poor whites and the determination to use all resources to make it happen was spreading and was an unacceptable development for the wealthy classes in the North and South.



Initially, the federal government defended these regimes with armed forces, above all to secure war victory. But when they saw the evolution and direction of these regimes, they eventually pulled out military defense and left the door open for reactionary forces they just defeated to retake control. Fascist groupings like the KKK -- that formed from the fear and resentment of Black liberation -- had free reign to smash the revolutionary gov'ts, with nooses, fire and steel.



The federal government pardoned thousands and thousands of former Confederate plantation owners, then made deals to give them back the land seized during the war and / or redistributed by the Reconstruction regimes.

If freed Blacks lived on the land, they were ordered to give up the land and be laborers for the former slave owners.



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<https://youtu.be/6Ge90PXpgg0?si=vDSF8VczCn6JwmU8&t=2785>

46:25 – end



The crushing of these **RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION REGIMES** is at the heart of racism, police brutality, and exploitation in the United States today.



You have to think hard to imagine the **level of violence needed to force a people on the eve of liberation back into a reality so close to slavery** that it was barely discernible.

**It was a FASCISTIC force** that assassinated officials, disappeared hundreds, carried out mass lynchings and imposed a martial law-level reality on Black people and their supporters.



It was during this bloody defeat that the term **white supremacy** was born. It's where the Confederate flag was re-established as the symbol of white supremacy. It's where some of the most horrid stories of terrorism of Black people came from. **The period of the 1860s and after that is when the highest concentration of lynchings took place.**



## Lynchings were used to:

- Stop political power efforts including voting
- Steal back land that was expropriated and redistributed; Black people could not inherit land, so if you died it went to the state
- Hide rapes and other abuses
- Intimidate Black fighters
- Discourage white participation



# EFFECTS OF RECONSTRUCTION from “Reconstruction: The 2nd Civil War

[https://youtu.be/6Ge90PXpgg0?si=80R0pQqx6td  
CM-DX&t=3430](https://youtu.be/6Ge90PXpgg0?si=80R0pQqx6tdCM-DX&t=3430)

57:10 – 58:33



Clearly not all white people supported with this, but it is important to understand just how deeply ingrained in society this counterrevolution was sewn.

# 1930







a 1942 YMCA brochure for Camp Minikani, a children's summer camp in Wisconsin.







It was on everything. Reinforced a thousand ways. From tissue paper and post cards to cereal. It was made “normal.”

This was actually an item available on Amazon a few years back. It was since taken down or renamed and I can't find it anymore





This attitude was not just relegated to the South, for those who hold up their noses about so called “red states” and cling to the progressive North.

# The Wayne County Democrat

VOL. 86 NO. 1

## ARKOS WILL SEE SPECIALIST



(By Courtesy of Creston Journal)

**Mode of Procedure to Be Fixed Before  
Actual Trial Begins—Chief  
Judge Cullen Presides—  
Prosecution Ready.**

The building will contain three fine business rooms and will make a handsome improvement for East

R. D. Barr, of Wooster, was knocked down by a brick in Cleveland Wednesday when the cornice of a building fell into the throng.

## CIVIL SERVICE

**Men Who Had Been Found Guilty of Violating Mann White Slave Traffic Act Take the Court Decree Laughingly.**

The whole matter dates back to the difference of opinion in the reports of improvements of the water works. Mr. Matz, now dead, and I could not agree with the estimates of the mayor on the improvements and water question and not at the present time.

## THE BLACK DODGER.

A citizen of Brooklyn, N. Y., writes to the New York Times, protesting against the common country fair and summer resort feature known as the African Dodger. As all know, this consists of pitching baseballs at the wolly head of a negro extended through a curtain.

The Times correspondent calls it a "barbarous practice that would not be tolerated in other civilized countries."

Yet authorities on anthropology state that the negro has a very heavy and massive cranium constituting a bony arch of great resisting power. One scientist refers to the "common habit of negroes, of both sexes in butting like rams." This he contends, indicates that a negro's head bones have a defensive strength unknown in the Caucasian race.

The popular impression is that the dodger does not find this occupation distressing. He seems cheerful about it. With mirthful derision he protrudes his flaming tongue. He chaffs his would-be tormenters for inept delivery. Perhaps it is much less painful to him than hoeing corn would be. He gets hit comparatively few times. The distance is always deceptive, and most of the balls drop low.

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So long established a diversion is not easily done away. Every popular assemblage contains a great number of men who play or have played baseball. They desire to establish or renew a reputation for accurate aim and swift delivery.

Potting that shiny black pate looks easy, often the presence of women friends stimulates a man's desire to display his powers. The thing appeals to American humor and for competition.

Until evidence is presented showing fractured skulls or brain concussions, the Black Dodger seems likely to continue a characteristic county fair feature. Perhaps the first to take issue with such protests as have been mentioned would be the dodger himself. He might regret to lose a daily wage that comes with less effort than manual labor.

THE THING IN LITTLE TOWNS



This violent blowback **STOPPED** and rolled back the kinds of reforms and expropriations that could have transformed this country into a government that provided cradle to grave education, universal healthcare, an even more robust public works program and other things.



A deep series of agrarian and social reforms that washed over the country and a ever-growing attitude of solidarity and unity could have meant the US would have never seized Puerto Rico, Hawaii and other lands. The U.S. may never have invaded and subverted countries throughout South America.



Four wars of devastation may have been averted. Palestine might be a land truly for Jews and Arabs. Apartheid may have been stomped out much earlier. The devaluation of currencies in central and South America may have never occurred.



And though I know it is hard to even envision.... Systemic racism could have been completely eradicated. With the basis for racism eliminated that would have put Black people in a different place not only in this society, but in other societies that mimic the bigotry of this country and the stereotypes left to fester from slavery.



This is why the defeat of Radical Reconstruction – aided not just by the former slavocracy– but the federal government is arguably the greatest defeat in world history.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880 (W.E.B Dubois)  
<https://a.co/d/cK2TQxT>
- Schools and Education During Reconstruction (Eric Foner)  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/reconstruction-schools-and-education-during-reconstruction/>
- How Reconstruction Created American Public Education (Adam Harris, The Atlantic)  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2023/12/reconstruction-education-black-students-public-schools/675816/>
- Racism, Revolution, Reaction 1861–1877 (Peter Camejo)  
<https://a.co/d/4pv3GRL>
- Reconstruction: The Second Civil War (PBS)