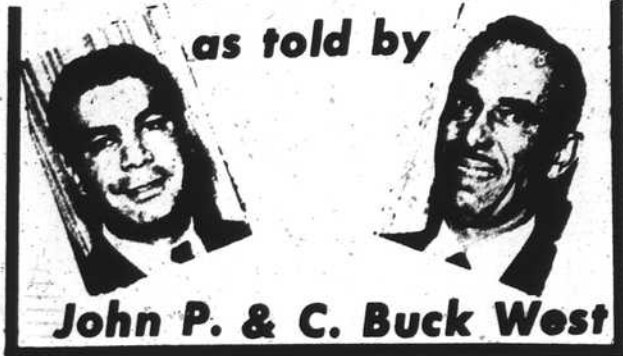


Hidden History

The Unsung Saga of the Black Man

as told by



John P. & C. Buck West

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IN THE VOICE'S Negro History Special Edition published March 30, essays of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners of the VOICE sponsored Negro History Essay Contest conducted in the high schools throughout the Clark County School District appeared.

Michael Buchanan, a Basic High School Junior will soon depart on the Oddfellows and Rebekah's annual United Nation Pilgrimage as a result of having his essay "The Negro As An American Soldier" judged as 1st place winner. The trip was the prize offered and financed by the Las Vegas VOICE.

It was not an easy task for the judges to make a decision among the many excellent essays submitted by students of the various high schools. Naturally, all the contestants could not be winners, but the general excellence of many of the essays was such we feel it would be shameful to not give our readers opportunity to read and enjoy the contributions of these local students.

The following was written by Brian McCormick, Las Vegas High School student.

THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE NEGRO IN THE AREAS OF EDUCATION, LABOR AND VOTING

"Discrimination against the Negro has been evident since the Negro was first brought to America. I have tried in the following essays to bring out in the open some of the discrimination and prejudice against the Negro, mostly in the Southern States.

In the following essays I have tried to point out some of the discriminations in the areas of education, of labor, and of voting equality for Negroes. Due to the wide variety of fields in which discrimination is evident, I have picked the fields which, in my opinion, seem to be the most important and also, areas which need to be discussed in order to find solutions.

From my research of materials and from the happenings around us, I have stated my results of the material I found and also my own evaluations of these subjects."

Discrimination in Education

DURING PRESIDENT Eisenhower's Administration the issue of extending equality of public treatment to Negroes divided the nation along sectional rather than party lines. President Eisenhower and his advisors were joined by a majority of Northern Democrats in the movement to extend civil rights to the Negroes on a full scale in the Southern States.

After a long Congressional debate, a bill was passed in the summer of 1957 which gave the Federal Government the right to seek court orders to guarantee the individual's right to vote in any state of the Union. Through these new bills, education was now becoming more equal for both the Whites and the Negroes.

A giant step for equal educational facilities was taken in May, 1954, when the Supreme Court, presided over by Chief-Justice, Earl Warren, former Governor of California, handed down a momentous decision on the segregation issue in the public schools. This ruling reversed a decision of 1896 (Plessy vs. Ferguson) that "separate, but equal" facilities were Constitutional.

THE NEXT step taken by the Court to secure

equal education for Negroes was on the decision of "Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka (1959). In this case the Court unanimously held the maintenance of "separate, but equal" schools for Negroes--which was practiced in seventeen states--violated the Fourteenth Amendment. "Separate educational facilities", said the Chief-Justice, "are inherently unequal."

Some of the Northern States and the Northern Courts are trying hard to push integration into a way of life in the Southern States, but the Southern Whites will fight against it any way they can. The Court believed that this should be worked out over a considerable period of time when they were handing down this decision. The Eisenhower Administration, although trying to push integration through at a fast rate, encouraged the States to work out their own plans.

Many problems have arisen since these plans have been put into use. One of these serious episodes happened in Little Rock, Arkansas. In September, 1957, the Board of Education of Little Rock was going to admit to high school eight carefully selected Negro students. The Governor of the state, Governor Faubus, insisting that violence would break out, used the Arkansas National Guard to bar them from the school building. President Eisenhower retaliated by sending Federal troops to Little Rock to protect the students as they went through the school year of 1957-58. President Eisenhower said that the action of Governor Faubus violated the Law of the Nation.

ANOTHER EPISODE which caused great concern was the registering of a Negro student into the University of Mississippi. Early in October, 1962, Governor Ross R. Barnett of Mississippi, personally intervened to prevent registration of a Negro, James H. Meredith, at the University. His admission had been ordered by the Federal Court. To counteract this move, the President sent in hundreds of Federal Marshals, called the Mississippi National Guard into Federal services, and reenforced Meredith's defenders with regular army units. In the rioting that followed Meredith's appearance on campus, two persons were killed and several others were wounded, but the Negro was registered and began to attend classes.

Another episode that happened in the South regarding the resistance of a governor of a state to the integration of schools was by governor Wallace of Alabama. In Alabama on September 9 and 10, 1963, four cities admitted twenty-four Negroes to previously all-white public schools.

ONCE AGAIN, a State Governor's attempt to resist school integration ran up against the power of the Federal Government. Alabama's Governor, George Wallace, put up a fight to keep his State in the ranks of total segregation. All his fight got for him was a week's delay in his fight for this cause.

When President Kennedy Federalized Alabama's National Guard and another showdown of force seemed destined to come to Governor Wallace, the Governor yielded.

"I can't fight bayonets with my bare hands," he said.

The episodes and problems I have stated above are some of the problems that are facing the Negro while trying to acquire an education. Segregation of races in public schools has become more and more an issue. At first there were boycotts, riots, rock throwing and bombing by Whites. Angry mothers removed their children from schools which had been integrated. Freedom marches are now quite common, the most noted one being the massive, but orderly one of August 28, 1963, in Washington, D.C. This is the method the Negroes are having to take in order that the nation may understand how they are being persecuted by Southern whites and are being barred from getting a thorough education for themselves and for their children.

Discrimination in Labor

THE INSECURITY of Negro workers after the Civil War was caused because of the great harassment they received from the majority of whites in the North and the South both.

The North was willing to admit that the Negro should be allowed to be free as they were but the North would not take the responsibility to secure their freedom for them. Instead of accepting this burden, as many of the Northerners felt this responsibility was, they would try to shift this responsibility on to someone else. No one was willing to jeopardize his own social position by helping to secure a higher social position for the Negro and help him obtain a job. The breakup of the large plantations into

smaller farms was not a social gain in all parts of the South as many people tried to make others believe. Too often it meant that the freedmen found it hard to find someone or some company willing to hire the Negro worker or help him secure a job. The Negroes who drifted into mill towns or who got employment in mines and factories found that their labor was abused almost as vigorously as it had been during the years of slavery.

ALTHOUGH MOST of the plantations of the South were broken up and the land was to be sold cheap to both the Negro and the white farmers, depending on who had the money to pay for it at the time. This was not the way this plan worked out. Land that had been worth \$20 to \$30 an acre before the war sold for \$3 to \$5 an acre after the war and sometimes less. In ten years, according to the census of 1870, the number of farms in South Carolina had increased from 33,000 to 52,000; in Mississippi, from 43,000 to 68,000; in Louisiana, from 17,000 to 28,000. A small number of the new landowners were Negroes; but their landholdings were very small and most of the land that changed hands went to the Whites who intimidated and harassed the Negro until he either just left or sold his land very cheap. These Negroes' security was becoming so slight that they could not even hold their own land and make a living by farming it.

ANOTHER FACTOR causing insecurity and also contributing to the degradation of the Negro was the uprising of "Black Codes" in the South. Mississippi was a very harsh state in reference to the Negro, and it still is today. Not only did the states under reconstruction deny the Negroes the right to vote, but also enacted "black codes" defining the civil rights of the ex-slaves. They gave the Negro a status (See HISTORY, page 15)

THIS WEEK IN NEGRO HISTORY

AN "NPI" FEATURE

- May 18, 1924 Cornerstone of Morris Memorial building was laid in Nashville, Tenn.
- May 18, 1955 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, founder-president, Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute, now Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Fla., died.
- May 19, 1853 First Negro YWCA organized in Washington, D.C.
- May 19, 1910 Enoc P. Waters, Jr., former editor, Chicago Defender and Associated editorial writer for the Continental News Service, New York, born in Philadelphia.
- May 20, 1743 Francois Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture, Haitian liberator, general, patriot and statesman, was born.
- May 20, 1939 American Medical Association dropped its color bars, permitting Negro physicians to join.
- May 21, 1883 Oberlin (Ohio) College announces acceptance of Negroes as students.
- May 21, 1955 The Rev. George W. Lee became the first Negro to register to vote in Belzoni, Miss. He was later murdered in retaliation.
- May 22, 1948 Claude McKay, poet-author, died in Chicago at age 58.
- May 23, 1779 Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable, Chicago's first settler, was born.
- May 24, 1854 Lincoln (Pa.) University was established by the Presbyterian church to educate Negroes.

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