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MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES OF AMERICAN HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

The study of the history all around the world has always been a motivating subject matter, the discovery of the most amazing facts and personalities make us go over books of different important authors once and again, increasing our cultural background and helping us to be more conscious of the reality of the world.

"History of the Culture of the English Speaking People", is an important subject not only for the students of English language but also for the teachers. In this monografy they can discover a useful tool which inspired to go deeper in the study of the English world history and culture.

In the realization of this work we dealt with different methods of investigation. We analysed the historical, religious, and literary events taking into account their significance for the American History, we also compared the different books such as: American History as well as some internet websites.

This work contains the most relevant facts and outstanding writers of the American history from the native American civilization to the end of the XX century. It was necessary to gather in one volume the greatest amount of information about this topic as a way of learning more about this theme.

It may as well serve for all those who in one way or another feel attracted by historical and cultural features, especially of the American people.

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1. Native American Civilization

1.1 Life and culture in the Colonies in North America



When the first Europeans reached North America in the Fifteenth Century, there were in this continent about twenty-five million Native Americans—misnamed “Indians” by Christopher Columbus and other explorers, who thought they had reached India—belonging to about 600 tribes. They spoke hundreds of languages that fell into many families. They lived in communities at different levels of organization, some in small migrant bands, others in well-established towns. They shared different religious beliefs and made their living by hunting, fishing or raising crops.

Despite such diversity, anthropological data seems to indicate that they shared a common ancestry. Evidence seems to indicate that most of them came from Asia across the Bering Strait, although some small groups may have crossed the Pacific Ocean. It seems that hunting bands followed their preys in successive waves, along a route from Asia to North America during the last glacial age. Then, the sea level was lower and the hunters and their families could have walked on land. From there, they slowly moved southwards in a successive waves populating the whole continent, north and south as well as the Caribbean, in a process of colonization that took thousands of years.



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According to the still-debated New World migration model, a migration of humans from Eurasia to the Americas took place via Beringia, a land bridge which formerly connected the two continents across what is now the Bering Strait

Most Native American societies, at the time of the conquest, lived in some form of tribal communalism based on the common ownership, control and usage of the land on a tribal basis whether the tribe made its living by hunting, fishing, farming, or by a combination of all these occupations. Consequently, the various ascending stages of the social were not based upon property or territorial considerations but upon family relationships. So, the family group was characterized by a great internal cohesion. Individuals found in the family and the tribe assistance and protection from the other members of the group.

Numerically, tribes were relatively small in number of members. They were all over a vast territory, separated one from the other by vast forests, deserts or mountains. Tribes lived in an endless state of war though occasionally they organized into confederations for common defense.

The Native American tribal society was a democratic institution. Since economy, be it gathering, hunting, fishing or agriculture was operated for the benefit of all. In most cases, all the members of the tribe, women included, had an equal voice in decision making and in the election.

The Native Americans had developed technical innovations that allowed them to survive in different geographical and climatic conditions, sometimes rigorously wild. Many tribes were skilled in making bows and arrows, traps, canoes in which they were able to travel easily and quickly over the lakes and rivers for miles. In some sections where the canoes could not be secured they made boats from tree trunks. For clothing, they used deerskin, furs of various animals such as the beaver, rabbit, and squirrel, and buffalo hides sewed with thread made from tendons of animals. Their utensils, cloth and housing were artistically decorated.

Some tribes in order to cook meat turned it slowly on a pole over the fire. Other tribes —the so-called “stone boilers”— boiled the meat by dropping hot stones into a dish filled with water. At other times, they cooked vegetables and meat by wrapping them in leaves and placing them in hot ashes. Those tribes who had already discovered and worked out pottery cooked their meals through the more conventional process.

Though there was a vast array of religious believes among the Native Americans, animistic conceptions were common, based on the idea that some animating spirit resides in some degree on everything, but concentrating in important natural objects like the sun, the sea, the buffalo, etc. Among the Atlantic coast tribes, the first met by the Europeans, religious festivals with definite forms of worship were common, including dancing and games as essential part of their ceremonies.

Agriculture was well developed in many regions by the Native Americans, the first farmers of the continent. They knew about the bringing of wild plants under control and the breeding of plants by seed selection. Many tribes had learned to fertilize and cultivate the soil as well as the importance of multiple cropping. They knew how to preserve foods— berries and fruits with syrup or honey, and fruits, vegetables and meat by artificial or sun drying. Their agricultural tools may seem crude by modern standards: the shoulder blade of a deer, a flat stone chipped and tied to a stick, and sometimes a mere stick.

The earliest Europeans reaching the Atlantic coast saw the Natives prepare the ground. Between the hills, they planted pumpkin and squash. Chief plants cultivated by the Native Americans were corn (maize), many varieties of beans, peas, onions, pumpkin and squash. Cotton was grown for its fiber; tobacco for smoking. Hunting was a basic and sometimes the sole occupation of many tribes. Buffalo, deer, caribou, and in some localities fish constituted the leading animal food.

For the sake of study, scholars have divided the tribes into eight general geographic areas in which they lived:

The Eastern Woodland. In this vast area extending west of the Atlantic coast up to the Midwestern and south from Nova Scotia to the Carolinas lived two powerful and antagonist tribal groups: the Algonquians and the Iroquois. The Algonquians, which included several tribes, were generally semisedentary, hunters and trappers, fishers and agriculturists. They cultivated a number of New World products like corn , pumpkins,

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squash, tobacco and tomatoes, which they introduced to the first European settlers. Their clothing was made from animal skin.

The Iroquois were the more important of the Eastern Woodland tribes. They were intensive agriculturists, depending on corn, beans and squash. Hunting, fishing and warfare were the primary occupations of men. Permanent villages frequently had wood around for protection. The Iroquois; were skilled makers of bone implements, pottery and basketware. Their tribes were generally divided into two “moieties” or phratries. Membership in one or the other determined the side taken in athletic contests and all-important ceremonials. These two divisions were in turn divided into gentes of maternal descent. Individuals were forced to marry out of their own gens. Tribal festivals were periodically held to celebrate the berrying season, the sowing and harvesting of corn.

The Southeast. There was abundant and varied food in this wooded region that lies between the Atlantic coast and the lower Mississippi valley from Tennessee to the Gulf of Mexico. Its peoples—among them the Cherokees, the Creeks and the Seminoles—developed the richest agriculture east of the Mississippi. The Cherokees were the most numerous eastern people, living in large permanent villages surrounded by extensive fields of corn and squash, but the Creeks were more powerful militarily which allowed them to survive as a cultural entity long after the conquest. In the early Eighteenth Century, some Creeks’ moved to Florida where, joined by Native Americans from other tribes and runaway slaves, they developed into a new group known as Seminoles. In the 1830’s after a long resistance the southeast tribes were driven westward by the US government.

The Plains. Stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from central Saskatchewan to Texas, this vast region was the homeland of two great cultures. In the fertile grass-covered plains towards the east, tribal culture was the result of a rich blend of Eastern Woodland and Southern tribal life. Those who made their homes here, the Osages, Kansas, Otos, and others, lived in semi-permanent villages and supported themselves by farming and hunting. In the High Plains lived small nomadic bands of Blackfeet Cheyennes, Comanches, and others, living in skin tepees and hunting the great buffalo (bison) herds. Plains life underwent a drastic change in the early 1700’s when the horse—unknown in America until the coming of the Spanish—reached the plains from the southwest. The horse made communications, warfare, and buffalo hunting easier and allowed the warriors to dominate the Plains, producing a completely new culture that crossed ancient tribal lines—the colorful befeathered world of the plains, whose epic has been widely reproduced by literature and films.

The Plateau. Here lived various tribes—among them the Cayuses, Flatheads and Wallawallas—who camped along the salmon-rich rivers and streams from where they obtained much of their food. These people were also excellent horsemen. Their hunting parties annually traveled into the plains to hunt buffalo. In time, their culture gradually mixed with that of the Plains people.

The Northwest Coast. This region extended between the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific shore, north of California. The Tribes living here, the Hupas, the Skokomishes and the Nooktas, among others, based their sustenance on the abundant fish living in the coastal waters. There was considerable trade between the Coastal peoples and the Plateau Tribes.

California. This was the most densely populated region north of Mexico with more than 100 different tribes—including the Yumas and Pomos—. Most of them lived in small nomadic bands, gathering abundant food in the mild climate and weaving splendid baskets. These tribes virtually disappeared under the European colonization.

The Great Basin. This region lies between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada. This mostly dry barren land provided for a poor life. The Shoshonis and Paintes lived there in small-scattered bands. They built brush lean-tos and depended largely on roots for survival. They, despite plainness of their lives they had a complex social and cultural structure with a particularly rich folklore.

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The Southwest. This is a hot arid area. There were several tribes living here. The best known are those who lived in the Pueblos. For hundreds of years the Zunis and Hopis lived in houses organized like apartments in the Colorado plateau. They belonged to an ancient culture that built the earliest known irrigation system in North., the Navahos and the Apaches being the best known perhaps. The Navahos, originally semi-nomadic, learned shepherding from the Spanish and the Mexicans. The Apaches remained in their old traditional nomadic life living on both sides of Mexican border until 1880. Noted for their love of freedom and bravery, they resisted subjugation for a long time.



1.2 Characteristics of British colonization of North America.

In general terms, the Europeans arrived at a continent that was inhabited by peoples who had different degrees of civilization, in some places more sophisticated than the people of Europe. Howard Zinn writes that,

They were a people without a written language, but with their own laws, their poetry, their history kept in memory and passed on, in an oral vocabulary more complex than Europe's, accompanied by song, dance, and ceremonial drama. They paid careful attention to the development of personality, intensity of will, independence and flexibility, passion and potency, to their partnership with one another and with nature.

Nevertheless, the conquerors proceeded on the assumption that the natives had no right to the land they lived in and that it was proper and ethically correct to destroy their "savage" cultures for the sake of "civilization".

The conquerors took the land from the natives by force. Sometimes, they masked such violent usurpation by "buying" the land. The natives did not understand very well the European concept of property on land and were easily deceived and then driven off their ancient domain. Soon the Europeans discovered that it was not possible to enslave American tribesmen. Their ways of life, their sense of individual freedom, their knowledge of the vast continent lying just west of the settlements where they could easily escape, made enslavement in any meaningful, profitable way impossible. Therefore, the colonists resorted to the policy of driving them away or killing them off.

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The fact that the British colonies in North America were settled by a country in a state of revolution was of tremendous significance in molding their subsequent development. During the Seventeenth Century Great Britain underwent its bourgeois revolution, and the colonies she simultaneously gave birth to, clearly bore the mark of this epoch making event: where the advanced elements of the migration settled, the new mode of production and ways of life were stimulated; where the most backward element settled, feudal ways were kept as far as possible

In New England and the Middle Colonies settled some of the most advanced groups of immigrant — yeomen farmers, artisans, and merchants— who brought with them the seeds of the capitalist mode of production. Consequently, this vast northern area had an urban outlook and based its economy on a diversified agriculture (the typical small farms producing a surplus for export). Here industry and trade developed quickly.

The growth of an agriculture based on family owned farms in New England and the Middle Colonies (as well as along the western frontier of the south) was of exceptional importance for the development of agriculture in the country.

The colonization of the South, on the other hand, was carried out under the leadership of feudal elements, and this was the fundamental reason for the development here of a rural life based on large plantations and slave labor.

From the Native Americans, the colonists learned to plant corn, a crop that did not require much toil or fertilizers and which yielded much food for people and farm animals in a short period. Many other plants were borrowed from pre-Columbian agriculture. A partial list would include tobacco, potatoes —sweet and white—, peanut, pumpkin, squash, tomatoes, watermelon, and some varieties of cotton and beans. From the Native Americans, also they learned ways of hunting and fishing that were best suited to their new home. They learned how to live in the forest and to blaze trails, the value of the birch-bark canoe, the wigwam form of tent, the use of the moccasin for traveling in the forest and the snowshoe for walking on the surface of snow, the use of herbs and roots, how to dress skins, and to make maple sugar. They were also taught how to hunt and trap game and to fish through the ice of the lakes and rivers. It is a sad historical irony that the Native Americans taught the Europeans how to live in the New World and they repaid by having that world taken away from them.

Ethno-linguistic classification

Far from forming a single ethnic group, Native Americans were divided into several hundred ethno-linguistic groups, most of them grouped into the Na-Dené (Athabaskan), Algonquian (including Algonquian), Uto-Aztecan, Iroquoian, Siouan-Catawban, Yok-Utian, Salishan and Yuman-Cochimí phyla, besides many smaller groups and several language isolates. Demonstrating genetic relationships has proved difficult due to the great linguistic diversity present in North America.

Gens structure

Early European American scholars described the Native Americans as having a society dominated by clans or gens (in the Roman model) before tribes were formed. There were some common characteristics:

- The right to elect chiefs.
- The right to depose chiefs.
- The obligation not to marry in the gens.
- Mutual rights of inheritance of the property of deceased members.
- Reciprocal obligations of help, defense,

The right to adopt strangers into the gens.

- Common religious rights
- A common burial place.
- A council of the gens

Tribal structure

Subdivision and differentiation took place between various groups. Upwards of forty stock languages developed in North America, with each independent tribe speaking a dialect of one of those languages. Some functions and attributes of tribes are:

The possession of the gentes.

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- The right to depose these chiefs.
- The possession of a religious faith.
- A supreme government consisting of a council of chiefs.
- A head-chief of the tribe in some instances.

1.3 Conquest and destruction of native population.

The discovery, conquest, and colonization of America resulted, in the main, from the growth and expansion of capitalism in Europe. Within European Medieval society, mercantile capitalism was then growing rapidly and demolishing the bases of the feudal system. During the three centuries that preceded the discovery of America, the enterprising European merchants incessantly traveled all over the then known world to develop trade. In the process, they built countless towns and cities and accumulated enough capital to fund exploratory voyages. They were laying the bases for the coming world of capitalism. As towns grew under the impetus of commercial expansion, the old relationships between lords and serfs broke down and national states emerged.

In their search for profits, innovative merchants pressed boldly against the barriers of endless woodlands, vast deserts and unknown seas. The immediate motive of the trips of discovery was the need to find a quicker and cheaper route to the East to make trade with Asia easier and safer. Several factors paved the way for Columbus' epoch-making voyages. By the end of the Fifteenth Century, there was a great intellectual revival in Europe. Developing capitalism shook and loosened the strangling grip of the Church upon mind. The growth of science and art put and end to the so-called Dark Ages. The Renaissance was then in full bloom. Signs were multiplying of the coming of the great Protestant Reformation.

The great advance that had just been made in the special sciences and arts involved in maritime navigation was of particular importance. It was already known by many people that the world was a sphere and Columbus was aware of this revolutionary discovery. From the Fourteenth Century on, many technological means which improved sea travel were evolved, perfected, and came into general use. With it came the astrolabe and the cross-staff, instruments that provided a way of measuring latitude. At the same time, cartographers began to work more accurately. Finally, a fast and strong ocean vessel, the caravel, had been evolved by the Fifteenth Century. The caravel was designed for transoceanic voyages and shallow coastal waters navigation at the same time, which made it proper for distant travel and explorations at the same time. It was also capable of windward sailing.

On August 3, 1492, Christopher Columbus, a Genoese mariner, sailed from Palos, Spain, with a fleet of three ships, to try to reach the Indies by sailing west. His route took him to one of the Bahamas. When on October 12, Columbus stepped ashore on the island he named San Salvador, it was one of the greatest moments of world history. The discovery of America, rather, the encounter of two worlds, gave an enormous stimulus to human progress in many directions. It undermined already decaying feudalism and accelerated the end of the Middle Ages opening up enormous possibilities of growth for the young European capitalist system.

Although the colonization of the New World also brought about endless human misery and sufferings, in the main it resulted in profoundly progressive developments. In essence, Columbus voyage ended the isolation of the Western hemisphere linking this huge land mass and the peoples that inhabited it with the rest of the world with epoch making cultural, economic and political outcomes.

By the early Seventeenth Century the British capitalist class, based on a developing industry and a flourishing trade, was already beginning to struggle for power against the declining feudal nobility. This fact was of great significance in the type of migration that settled the British colonies, their political set up, and their further development. Colonization was based on the practices of the mixed feudal—mercantile system then prevailing at home.

The purpose of British colonial policy was to grab the land and exploit the people and the natural resources of the New World for the benefit of the capitalist and feudal classes, then ruling Great Britain, and their subsidiary classes in America. The English economic, political and cultural systems developed in the Americas were built to satisfy those objectives. Growing European capitalism was the engine that started the

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process of colonization. Soon, the exploitation of the colonies began to feed that growth and the two processes became entwined and mutually dependent.

Foreign markets were particularly significant to British mercantile and manufacturing developments. This was more so because persistent feudal relationships in many areas of British life restricted the capacity of the home market. Besides, many European governments, under the influence of nascent capitalist classes, followed policies that intended to exclude foreign competition. Consequently, the expansion of those markets, especially in the Americas, was a leading policy of Parliament and Crown since the early Seventeenth Century.

British merchants invested the excesses of their profits in textile, leather, wool, metal, and other manufactures. Domestically, such investments and the subsequent developments intensified the shift from a feudal to a capitalist economy and increased the demand for markets and sources of raw materials abroad. Since the beginning, the colonies were regarded as the natural sources of raw materials for the English manufactures. Products like lumber, furs, naval stores, precious metals, fish, tobacco, indigo, rice, etc., made the fortunes of many English merchants and manufacturers who then invested in further developments of manufactures and new colonial enterprises.

British merchants and entrepreneurs shared continental dreams of a passage to the Far East by an opening through the continent. Common to them was also the hope of quick riches by means of the discovery of gold and silver. The quest for a passage to the Indies led to the explorations of Verrazano (1524) and Hudson (1609) which gave the Europeans an early knowledge of what would later be the Atlantic coast of the United States.

The growth of capitalism in Britain led to the pauperization of important sections of the population. The enclosure of the land resulting from the development of commercially oriented, capitalist farms and the ruin of artisans resulting from the development of the new, capitalist manufactures created a vast mass of unemployed, starving unemployed. When colonies were settled along the Atlantic coast of North America, there were millions ready to take any risk to find a way out of misery and deprivation at home, a solution generally supported by the British ruling classes who saw the colonies as safety valves to release social pressure at home. Together with beggars and convicts, the sons of the growing impoverished nobility saw America as an opportunity and willingly tried to find a better future across the Atlantic.

During the Seventeenth Century English Bourgeois Revolution, political and religious creeds were deeply interrelated. Feudal reaction fought under the banners of Catholicism or Anglicanism, while the bourgeoisie hoisted the flags of the radical Protestant sects, like that of the Puritans. The social conflict brought about political-religious persecutions in which many people were driven to migrate to the American colonies looking for a refuge for themselves and their families.

The struggle among European powers to establish a foothold in the newly found lands of America also contributed to hasten colonial settlements. The settlement of the Thirteen Colonies was encouraged by British rulers to check the northward advance of the Spaniards and the southward pressure of the French.

England entered the process of colonization later than the other powers. Henry VII did not support Columbus' offers because Great Britain was just then recovering from the devastating Wars of the Roses (1455 to 1485) which had set the nation in turmoil and had left the Crown's finances empty. Henry VII was the architect of national integration but such process proved to be long and difficult. England was not ready yet to engage in transoceanic ventures.

For two centuries, the Spaniards and the Portuguese took the initiative in exploration and colonization, with few exceptions. In 1497, John Cabot discovered Newfoundland and established a fur-trading station in the Hudson Bay territory. In 1581, Sir Walter Raleigh made an unsuccessful attempt to establish a British colony in North America under the name of Virginia, in honor of the British monarch. It was not until early Seventeenth Century when Britain seriously attempted colonization projects in America.

The first colonies were enterprises of joint stock companies funded by capitalists from the south of England. The Crown lacked the necessary funds to take a direct part in those efforts. This also showed economic power of London merchants as compared with their counterparts in Madrid or Lisbon. In time, the British Crown gained political ascendancy upon the conquered territories and the settlements became Crown colonies.

Human and Cultural Costs

Almost everywhere in this hemisphere, the Europeans were received in a friendly manner. In a letter written in 1493, Columbus describes such reception: "...they refuse nothing that they possess, if it be asked of them; on the contrary they invite anyone to share it and display as much love as if they would give their hearts". Were it not for the cooperation of the Native Americans, the colonists would have perished in an unknown, harsh environment where climate, plants and animals were alien to them.

By contrast, the attack of the conquerors was marked by extreme brutality. Despite heroic resistance, the natives could not stand the onslaught. The Europeans had fundamental advantages that resulted from higher forms of social organization, unity, and superior weapons and material resources. Worst of all, the invaders brought with them diseases like the yellow fever, small pox, measles, typhus, cholera and the bubonic plague which, unknown to the natives, resulted in devastating epidemics that killed millions. Sometimes, the conquerors intentionally introduced the infections. Sir Jeffery Amherst, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in North America in 1760's, ordered to spread small pox among the Native Americans by giving them blankets infected with the disease as presents. In 1763, he wrote to a subordinate at Fort Pitt, "You will do well to try to inoculate the Indians by means of blankets, as well as to try every other method that can serve to extirpate this execrable race. I should be very glad your scheme for hunting them down by dogs could take effect."

Alcohol, introduced by the whites, also had demoralizing consequences among the Native Americans. Drinking debilitated the will to resist colonization and had devastating consequences for tribal and family structures. In 1784, Benjamin Franklin wrote that rum "... has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the seacoast".

The conquerors took the land from the natives by force. Sometimes, they masked such violent usurpation by "buying" the land, as Peter Minuit's "purchase" of Manhattan Island for 24 dollars worth of trinkets. The natives did not understand very well the European concept of property on land and were easily deceived and then driven off their ancient domain. Soon the Europeans discovered that it was not possible to enslave American tribesmen. Their ways of life, their sense of individual freedom, their knowledge of the vast continent laying just west of the settlements where they could easily escape, made enslavement in any meaningful, profitable way impossible. Therefore, the colonists resorted to the policy of driving them away or killing them off.

Captain John Mason, one of the leaders of the colonists during the settlement of Connecticut, wrote an account of one of the expeditions of his soldiers against the Native Americans. According to his account, they came to the native's village, early in the morning, while the inhabitants were still asleep. After surrounding the exits, they set the wigwams on fire. Here is part of his account:

...The Indians ran as men most dreadfully amazed... The fire was kindled in the North East side to the windward which swiftly overrun the Fort, to the extreme amazement of the enemy and the great rejoicing of ourselves. Some of them climbing to the top of the Palizado, others of them running into the very flames; many of them gathering to windward, lay petting at us with their arrows; and we repaid them with our small shots. Others of the stoutest issued forth as we did guess, to the number of forty who perished by the Sword... And thus in little more than one Hour's space was their impregnable Fort with themselves utterly destroyed; to the number of Six or Seven Hundred...

Once the United States emerged as a nation, such policy was more systematically carried. The main tribes living in the area occupied by the new nation were driven across the Mississippi, defeated in wars in the plains and the survivors forcibly driven into the so-called Indian reservations. In this way, the whole continent was cleared of their aboriginal inhabitants

There were individual churchmen who supported the cause of the Native Americans, as was the case of the Spanish priest Las Casas. However, churches, as institutions, generally supported the commission of the worst abuses with the excuse of evangelizing the heathen. The conquerors, as it has been said, "first fell upon their knees and, then upon the aborigines".

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It is traditionally stated that the conquest of the Americas was progressive for the natives because the normal course of evolution of their society was interrupted, however rudely, and they were catapulted into civilization. Such conception has been challenged very seriously by scholars. First, the notion of “civilization” cannot be narrowed to the concept of “technological advance”. It is understood that social and political structures that permit individuals “the pursuit of happiness” are necessary as well as technological means that allow for a sufficient and sustainable living. In that sense, Nazi Germany, with all its industrial and scientific developments, cannot be considered more “civilized” than the Inuit, people who reached a wonderful adaptation to the extreme conditions of the artic.

Colonization

Crossing the Atlantic was a risky and extremely uncomfortable, back in the Seventeenth Century. A letter written by a traveler describes his trip to America in 1732, that is, more than a hundred years after the first newcomers arrived. “We were 24 weeks coming from Rotterdam to Martha’s Vineyard. There were at first more than 150 persons; more than 100 perished. To keep from starving we had to eat rats and mice. We paid from 8 pence to a shilling for a mouse, 4 pence for a quart of water.”

After such a trip, the settlers arrived in a place alien to them with unknown flora and fauna, usually uninhabited. They disembarked in a desolate coast to face the sky and the never-ending wilderness. They had no houses to shelter, no food except for what they brought in their ships. In some places it was necessary to get under a shelter quickly, so they lived in caves dug in the side of a hill until they could have time to chop down the trees for houses; in other places they occupied the houses of the natives.

The major problem was to find enough food for the newly born community. There were animals in the forest, fish in the streams and good soils for agriculture, but the Europeans did not have the proper technologies to make use of the resources of the new continent. Usually, the settlers starved in the midst of abundance. Thousands died. The support of the Native Americans for the survival of the early settlements was crucial.

Indian Massacres

Determining how many people died in these massacres overall is difficult. In the book *The Wild Frontier: Atrocities during the American-Indian War from Jamestown Colony to Wounded Knee*, amateur historian William M. Osborn sought to tally every recorded atrocity in the area that would eventually become the continental United States, from first contact (1511) to the closing of the frontier (1890), and determined that 7,193 people died from atrocities perpetrated by whites, and 9,156 people died from atrocities perpetrated by Native Americans. Osborn defines an atrocity as the murder, torture, or mutilation of civilians, the wounded, and prisoners. Different definitions would obviously produce different totals

The Early Settlements

The country which is now the United States of America had its beginning on that strip of land which lies between Nova Scotia and Florida, on the eastern coast of North America. Virginia (1607) was the first successful colony. The enterprise was organized and carried out by the London Company under a charter granted by King James I. The colonists founded Jamestown near the Chesapeake Bay. At the beginning, they tried unsuccessfully to find gold and hunger and disease decimated them. In the end, thanks to the support of the natives and the cultivation of tobacco, which they exported to Europe, the colony survived. In 1624 King James I annulled the charter and took the government of Virginia into his own hands appointing a governor and a council to rule. In this way, Virginia was transformed into a royal colony.

Other colonies followed in the following century and a half, with a pattern of foundation rather similar to that of Virginia until the English had thirteen colonies along the coast. Other Europeans, like the French, were active in the colonization of North America. The French explored the Saint Lawrence Valley, up to the head of the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi to the Gulf, and established trading posts from New Orleans, at the mouth of the Mississippi, to the western end of Lake Superior and towards the east to Nova Scotia. But the most settled and populated colonies were those of the British.

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Soon after a colony was established, people living in it began to settle further to the west looking for better, free lands. Newcomers arrived from Europe and found that most of the land, and all of the good lands had already grabbed by those who came earlier. The solution was to move westwards. The colonization of the West was a mass venture in which millions of people, men, women and children, left their homes and embarked in perilous trips to the unknown. They arrived in deserted woodlands or prairies, felled down trees, built houses and began agricultural projects. In this way, since very early began a territorial expansion that was to mark the future of the nation, the saga of the colonist.

The Thirteen Colonies

By the middle of the Eighteenth Century, English settlements filled the long strip of land between Nova Scotia and Florida, between the Appalachian Mountains and the sea. By then, there were about three million people living in the English colonies, many of them born in France, Germany, Scotland and Ireland. Many who had been born in Africa and had been brought captives to America to work and live as slaves. The settlements were politically organized into Thirteen Colonies. Due to their socioeconomic peculiarities, they constituted three distinct regions. New England Colonies: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The Middle Colonies: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The Southern Colonies: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina. South Carolina and Georgia.

The fact that the British colonies in North America were settled by a country in a state of revolution was of tremendous significance in molding their subsequent development. During the Seventeenth Century Great Britain underwent its bourgeois revolution, and the colonies she simultaneously gave birth to, clearly bore the mark of this epoch making event: where the advanced elements of the migration settled, the new mode of production and ways of life were stimulated; where the most backward element settled, feudal ways were kept as far as possible.

In New England and the Middle Colonies settled some of the most advanced groups of immigrant — yeomen farmers, artisans, and merchants— who brought with them the seeds of the capitalist mode of production. Consequently, this vast northern area had an urban outlook and based its economy on a diversified agriculture (the typical small farms producing a surplus for export). Here industry and trade developed quickly.

The growth of an agriculture based on family owned farms in New England and the Middle Colonies (as well as along the western frontier of the south) was of exceptional importance for the development of agriculture in the country.

The colonization of the South, on the other hand, was carried out under the leadership of feudal elements, and this was the fundamental reason for the development here of a rural life based on large plantations and slave labor.

Native American Heritage

From the Native Americans the colonists obtained not only their land but also fundamental skills and techniques. Pre-Columbian agriculture, like contemporary European agriculture, was based on tradition rather than on science. Nevertheless, it was well adapted to the climate and the flora of America. The Native Americans cleared the land by cutting a girdle deep into the bark and around the trunk of trees, allowing them to die. Then, the field was burnt. A single field was used as long as it yielded good crops. When the soil showed evidence of exhaustion, the site was abandoned and a new field was cleared. The colonists resorted to the same method.

From the Native Americans, the colonists learned to plant corn, a crop that did not require much toil or fertilizers and which yielded much food for people and farm animals in a short period. Many other plants were borrowed from pre-Columbian agriculture. A partial list would include tobacco, potatoes —sweet and white—, peanut, pumpkin, squash, tomatoes, watermelon, and some varieties of cotton and beans. From the Native Americans, also they learned ways of hunting and fishing that were best suited to their new home. They learned how to live in the forest and to blaze trails, the value of the birch-bark canoe, the wigwam form of tent, the use of the moccasin for traveling in the forest and the snowshoe for walking on the surface of snow, the use of herbs and roots, how to dress skins, and to make maple sugar. They were also taught how to hunt and trap game and to fish through the ice of the lakes and rivers. It is a sad historical irony that the Native Americans taught the Europeans how to live in the New World and they repaid by having that world taken away from them.

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New England

In New England—with the exception of the Connecticut and Maryland valleys—the rock studded soil, the harsh climate, and the type of colonization carried out mainly by yeomen farmers, artisans, and merchants, prevented the emergence of large plantations worked by servants or slaves. The region was settled with small farms and compact villages.

The governments of the colonies granted townships of about fourteen square kilometers to groups of proprietors, often organized into a church congregation. The settlers laid out the main street, the village green and the centrally located church. Each freeman received a home lot (from 3 to 5 acres), enough for a house, a vegetable garden, and a cow yard. After this, arable land in the outlying fields was assigned, each family receiving different kinds of soil with rude equity. For that reason, a farmer in Seventeenth Century New England usually owned tracks of various shapes and sizes spotted over the whole area of the township. Land was granted in large or small allotments according to the rank and wealth of the recipient, he who already had more receiving more. Land set aside for common use as the town green, and the woods disappeared with growing population and successive divisions.

The system wherein each individual's land lay in scattered tracks gave way to one in which each owned a single consolidated farm. This New England enclosure movement proceeded slowly but constantly. The sale of the most distant tracks to newcomers was the most usual way of consolidation.

In New England, the Appalachians were closer to the coast than in the other regions, the rivers were narrow, short, and swift, with frequent falls in many places. Except for Connecticut Valley and a few other favored regions, the soil was stony, thin, and of low fertility. The settlers had not only to chop down trees to make a clearing but they had to spend many additional hours, picking up boulders. Farmers also had to face the unkind seasons of these northern latitudes, where winters were long and cold, springs late and summers short. In such conditions, plantation agriculture was unthinkable.

New England economy was predominantly agricultural—the farmers constituting 85 per cent or more of the population. And this was so although commercial and industrial life was more developed here than in the other settlements. New England's agriculture was diversified. It was based on limited land grants, free labor and food crops, chiefly for the home market. The typical New Englander of the colonial period lived on a small relatively self-supporting farm that could be taken care of by a family. The men raised the foodstuff necessary for the support of the family with some surplus to sell, and often themselves constructed many of the farm implements and furniture that the family needed. The women preserved the food for winter, spun, wove the wool or flax, and made the clothing for the family. The average farmer needed a few but basic goods from outside the farm as iron for his agricultural implements, guns for hunting and defense, salt for his table and to preserve the meats, as well as a few other commodities. Women married very young and raised large families of many children. Because they worked so hard and bore so many children, very often the women died at an early age. Their husbands frequently married again and another family was started.

Agricultural methods were crude. Plows, harrows, spades, forks, made of wood, were the chief farm tools. As land was plentiful, the rotation of crops was rarely practiced. Corn was the staple crop. They planted it in hills and fertilized with fish following the natives' tradition. Corn gave a good yield and served for many purposes, both for the farmer's table and for his animals. The farmer also traded his surplus of corn for Native Americans' furs. Together with pumpkins, squash and beans from the American stock of plants, the farmer also imported several European plants and animals that grew well in the new continent, such as wheat, peas, turnips, carrots, as well as pigs, cows, horses, mules, and farm fowl.

Imported animals quickly formed large herds because of the abundance of food in meadows and woodlands. Hogs fed freely on nuts and apples and supplied the family with meat throughout the year. Cows provided the household with milk and all kinds of dairy products and bulls were widely used as beasts of burden to drag plows and wagons while horses were used in lighter, faster tasks. Every family had a flock of sheep providing them with high quality food and wool.

New England was more urbanized than the other regions. In towns along the coast and soon to the interior, manufactures quickly developed. Artisans were numerous among the immigrants. Protestant sects were widespread among British artisans and many of the dissenters who migrated to escape persecutions were skilled artisans.

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Itinerant artisans traversed the countryside taking their trade with them. In isolated, remote places, their visits were welcome. A shoemaker, for instance, would spend several days living in the household while he made shoes for the entire family out of its own leather. Or there might come a traveling weaver who would set up his loom and weave into cloth the thread spun by the women and children of the family since his last visit. In more prosperous or populated places, artisans (called “mechanics” in the colonies) made a settled living. There were Blacksmiths, leather workers, cabinetmakers, fullers, dyers, and saw and grist millers.

Colonial manufacturing was, typically represented by the small shop where a master, exploiting the labor of some apprentices and journeymen, produced goods for the neighborhood. The master artisan opened a shop, usually in his own home and worked on order for the townspeople. The apprentices worked for their masters a stipulated term, frequently seven years, during which they learned the mysteries of the craft and then, they became journeymen entitled to receive wages for their labor.

Some colonial industrial processes were under capitalist control. Enterprises like the refining of iron or the manufacture of glass, which required too great an investment for the individual artisan, were often owned by partnership or companies. Usually, the funds were supplied by English investors. The so-called “domestic” system, common in Great Britain, was found in the colonies. Merchants invested their capital in wool or flax that they delivered to farm households to be spun into thread or woven into cloth. In time, some industries began to be taken out of the home and into special buildings where artisans labored under supervision. As early as 1646, in the colony of Virginia there were two spinning houses where groups of poor children were exploited. Similar establishments emerged elsewhere.

Due to the cost of iron commodities and the abundance of ore deposits, iron works were early erected. A furnace was built at Massachusetts as early as 1643. Similar ironworks were established in different places producing nails, horseshoes, kitchen utensils and agricultural implements. British ruling classes were greatly concerned with preventing the development of industry in their colonial possessions. They did not want the growth of industries that would compete with those of Great Britain. Consequently, the laws governing the colonies were filled with provisions issued to strangle competitive industries to preserve the colonies as mere producers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured products. In 1732, Parliament promulgated a decree preventing the manufacture of hats in the American colonies and in 1750, there was another that prohibited the erection of various types of iron works. But such efforts were largely in vain for, in spite of every attempt to check them, the various industries continued to grow. Skilled artisans and men with some capital came from Great Britain and stimulated the industrialization of the colonies, especially those of New England.

Foster writes that “In this colonial situation and with the unwittingly stimulating influence of England’s industrial system, was to be seen the beginning of the great industrial development of the United States.”

A problem for the colonists was to find the necessary labor force to work in their fields and houses. To satisfy such need no ethical or religious principle stopped them from enslaving in one way or another people of all races, cultures or ages. Perhaps the worst abuses were committed against African Americans, but Native American and poor immigrants were enslaved whenever it was possible.

Enslaving Native Americans was overall unsuccessful. Phillip Phoner writes, “...In America there were Indians who could be captured and sold as slaves. Unfortunately for the exploiters the Indians were inclined to escape to their tribes and then return in increased numbers to pay their respects to their former masters by taking their scalps”.

The wealthy proprietors of New England and the Middle Colonies used African slaves for household, but their employment in cultivation was unsuccessful. Agriculture in the North was diversified and slave labor is only productive where tasks are simple and organized in a routine. Slavery was only profitable in the monotonous and unskilled activities of Southern agriculture in which the most crude and hard to break implements were used. Besides, only at the expense of keeping the slaves in the depths of ignorance, could the slave system exist. Great landowners found it more profitable to rent their lands. The problem was that it was relatively easy to obtain land in the west. The solution was a system of white forced servitude.

Some indentured servants, as the white servants were called were forced to sell themselves into bondage for periods up to seven years or more to get their passage paid, escape hardships in Europe and try a new fortune in the New World. Others were carried against their will. Thousands of paupers and convicts

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were put on ships and sent to the colonies as virtual slaves. The majority of those convicts were men who had resorted to minor offenses such as poaching, stealing a loaf of bread or falling in debt. Many of the transported prisoners were Irish and Scotch patriots who had fought against British colonialism.

Due to the demand for laborers, numerous servants were kidnapped. The streets of London were full of kidnappers who made an easy pray of the children of the poor. It is estimated that about 10 000 are kidnapped in a single year during the reign of Charles II. The beggars were horrified to speak with anyone who mentioned the terrifying word "America". Parents were torn from their homes, husbands from their wives and sent to work as virtual slaves. Ship captains transported prospective servants to the New World under conditions slightly better than those existing in slave ships, and auctioned them off to the wealthy settlers.

The indentured servants worked and lived in conditions similar to those of the Black slaves of the South. Sometimes they were even worse because their masters tried to obtain as much as possible from them before their period of servitude expired. The indentured servants were not allowed to marry. They were usually branded, and their master could whip them whenever he liked. They were given the worst clothes and food. Their working hours were long and exhausting. The servants who survived their term became wage laborers or tried their fortune in western lands. White servitude was also widespread in the South, being slowly replaced by Black slaves. About a 60 per cent of the inhabitants of the colonies were non-free, either Black or white.

In the numerous and important farms of New England and the Middle Colonies, the fundamental source of labor was provided by the farmers themselves and their large families. Colonial farmers suffered the exploitation of the ruling classes, well entrenched in the coastal towns; the usurer, who advanced him money on interest, the landlord, whom he had to pay a quit rent according to the prevailing feudal laws, the land speculator who sold him the land, colonial governments who levied taxes.

The owners of the various types of manufactures, merchants, and ship owners exploited the free labor resulting from manumitted serfs, apprentices who had served their period, newcomers, etcetera.

Rural life was never completely self-sufficient and trade was significant from the beginning. The farmer needed iron, salt, sugar, fire weapons, gunpowder, iron cooking utensils, agricultural implements, and many other manufactures. He always managed to obtain a surplus to secure the necessary cash to buy those products. In the backcountry, there were trading posts, in the villages there were country storekeepers. In the colonial ports wealthy merchants engaged in both wholesale and retail trade. They owned or took shares on ships and built their own wharves and warehouses. Trade in the towns was regulated by the public authorities. The price of bread and other basic commodities was fixed by law, and the privilege of trading was usually reserved for the inhabitants of the town. Like in Europe, there was a weekly market day, when country people sold or bartered their produce with the towns' people in the public market place, and the annual fairs, particularly important for the exchange of livestock. Goods between the colonies were carried on the water. There was an important coastwise and transoceanic trade in which the New Englanders were the leaders, rivaled only by the enterprising merchants of Philadelphia and New York in the Middle Colonies.

Exports were largely dependent on the immediate natural resources. The products of the forests and of the sea were basic exports together with the products of agriculture and manufacture. Some leading exports would include: from the forests, timber, fur, tar and turpentine; from the sea, various grades of salt fish, whale oil and sperm; from agriculture, wheat and other grains, salt pork and beef, dairy products, horses, and hides; from manufacture, rum, barrels and ships.

Triangular Trade

Colonial vessels traded with the ports of southern Europe, exchanging fish, timber, corn, salt, meat, barrel stoves, etc., for Madeira and Canary wine, Malaga grapes, Valencia oranges and Spanish gold. Colonial vessels then called at Great Britain to exchange wine, fruit and corn for English manufactures that found ready sale in the colonies, thus forming a three cornered traffic known as Triangular Trade. The sugar and the slave "triangles" were based on the profitable trade with the sugar islands of the West Indies. Fish, particularly the cheapest grades, had a ready sale as food for the slaves; so did dried beef, pork, wheat, and peas. Lumber had a market, as did horses for the sugar mills. In exchange for these products, they obtained molasses, and sugar. Many of these commodities were carried directly to England to be exchanged for manufactured goods that were quickly sold in the colonies. Molasses were distilled into rum and the rum

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taken to Africa to be exchanged for slaves, the latter in turn brought back and sold to the West Indies and Southern planters.

Triangular Trade was an essential source for the accumulation of capital that was to be used for industrialization. It also promoted the development of the farms and of the budding northern industries by offering a wide market for their products.

Slave trade was an essential component of Triangular' Trade. For most of the Eighteenth Century over 20 000 slaves were transported every year. Many great fortunes were founded on this inhuman but profitable business. Along the West Coast of equatorial Africa, the slave hunters erected their forts where they obtained slaves from local chieftains in return for rum, guns, powder, beads, cloth, knives, and other products. These chiefs kidnapped members of neighboring tribes and sold them to the whites. This brought about local wars that were disastrous for the African continent. The slave hunters chained the slaves together, marched them hundreds of miles, branded them like cattle, transported them across the sea in horrible slave ships, and sold them off to colonial masters like animals. On shipboard the slaves were packed, starved, and brutalized. Large number of them perished. Many fierce insurrections took place on these hell ships. Perhaps greed has never led humans into worse degradation than slave trade.

The space for the slaves in those slavers, as the ships were called, was so narrow that they had to sit between each other's legs and could not lay down or at all change their position night or day. Sanitary conditions were so horrible that the stench of these ships could be smelled several miles down the wind. Often, short of provisions or water, or in danger of capture, slavers threw their human cargoes to the sharks. Despite these losses, profits in slave trading ran as high as 1000 per cent on a single voyage. In 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht gave the British the Asiento or slave trading monopoly, further stimulating this business. New England traders, as part of the British Empire, made the infamous slave traffic a regular and highly profitable business. Yankee slavers, the fastest ships afloat, brought colonial merchants huge profits. Rhode Island alone had 150 vessels in the slave trade in 1770.

Great Britain, in accordance with her policy of ruthlessly exploiting the colonies, attempted to monopolize and restrict colonial commerce, both among the colonies themselves and with the rest of the world. This policy was very harmful to the growth and prosperity of the colonies. In 1650, foreign ships were forbidden to trade with British colonies in America without a license. Certain colonial products, such as tobacco, rice, indigo, masts, turpentine, tar, pitch, beaver skins, pig iron, and others (the list of enumerated articles increased with time) had to be sent to Great Britain only. Heavy duties were imposed on the import of such vital commodities as sugar and molasses.

The Navigation Act of 1651 stated that all commodities destined to the colonies, had to be shipped in British vessels. According to the Act of 1663 all goods (with few exceptions) purchased by American merchants in Europe or Asia had to be sent to Great Britain first, and then be reshipped. This would prevent direct trade between the colonies and foreign countries. Import and export duties were charged on this transshipment by such monopolistic devices the English merchants, ship owners, and politicians took their share from the colonial trade. They hoped that colonial trade would be in the hands of British merchants and that no colonial mercantile class would form to offer competition. Nevertheless, these hopes proved illusory. Such devices could not stop the rapidly growing trade in the North American Colonies, especially in the New England and the Middle Colonies. British legislation was a serious limitation on trade and the colonials openly violated its provisions. The violation of British laws was both an economic necessity and a source of wealth for merchants. They shipped enumerated articles directly to foreign ports and smuggled goods directly back to the colonies without stopping at Great Britain. Smuggling was easy. The colonies were three thousand miles from Great Britain; their coastline was long and irregular; British officials were very easy going; the customhouse officers could be easily bribed.

Great Britain was very frequently at war and the normal course of trade was apt to be interrupted. Then, the peaceful trading vessels became privateers. A privateer was an armed merchant vessel with a commission from the king that gave it the right to seize and keep the enemy's ships. It was so much profitable that often many of these ship captains continued privateering after the war was over. Thus privateering became piracy. Actually, there was little difference between privateering and piracy. A number of colonial fortunes both in the Middle Colonies and in New England were built on merchant vessels turned privateers.

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The Middle Colonies

Although several aristocratic lords came into this region, most of the immigrants were farmers, artisans and traders. The large estate, so exceptional in New England, was common in the Middle Colonies. The Penn family, which exercised proprietary rights in Pennsylvania and Delaware reserved extensive lands for itself and made large grants to individuals. In New Jersey, there were many large estates. The royal government of New York granted lands to aristocratic families in the form of feudal domains. Along the Hudson, there were similar large properties. Corrupted royal governors also granted much of the best land to speculators. The great landowners demanded rents from those who settled in their properties.

Although large landholdings were common in the Middle Colonies, more numerous were the family sized farms of between 100 and 200 acres —slightly larger than those of New England were. This resulted from the unauthorized settlement of thousands of new immigrants from Europe and from the other colonies.

The Middle Colonies resembled New England in many ways. In these colonies, the farmer found a climate approximating his native land in Europe and a soil richer than in New England. Here the plain ran between the Appalachians and the sea was vast, the soil was fertile and the growing season was long; the rivers were wide and deep and the rainfall generous. This region soon became known as the “bread Colonies” for cereals became their staple product. They cultivated wheat, corn, barley, rye, and oats. Apples, peaches and melons were abundant. Large herds of cattle grazed on the coastal lowlands; hogs ran wild in the woods; and sheep were plentiful.

As family farms predominated, the plantation system with a single staple and Black slave labor did not exist. In the Middle Colonies, like in New England, there were few Black slaves, except as house servants of the wealthy. On the other hand, indentured servants were very numerous.

In the region where New England and the Middle Colonies were settled, there were vast forests. As the demand for timber was great and the profits large, many settlers were employed in lumbering operation. At first, the logs were cut into boards by two-man teams operating great handsaws. In time, sawmills employing waterpower were erected. North American timber had a large market both in England and in the West Indies.

The shipping industry had a great development in the northern region, above all in New England where all the materials were easily obtainable. There were vast forests close to the sea providing timber, masts, pitch, tar, while hemp for rope was grown in the fields. Soon New Englanders built shipyards along the coast where they built vessels for local merchants and fishers as well as for those in England as well. By the end of the colonial period, one third of the British merchant marine had been built in North America. Many industries related to ship building grew. Ropeyards, sail lofts, and foundries to make the ship hardware appeared. From the pines pitch, tar, rosin, and turpentine were made.

East to the northern region there are the Banks of Newfoundland, among the best fishing areas of the world. There, New England fishing boats fished cod, salmon, herring, mackerel and the eagerly sought whales. European countries were a good market for fish. Southern and West Indies planters in bought the poorest grades of fish to feed their slaves. There was a good profit in the bones and oil of the whales. New England vessels traveled as far as the poles, the Pacific and the coasts of Africa to fish whales.

Since very early, the colonists carried an extensive fur trade with the Native Americans. This soon became a leading industry, largely monopolized by commercial companies. The natives brought beaver skins, deerskins, bearskins, mink skins, and gray and red fox skins worth dozens of pounds to the trading posts to be traded for rum, trinkets or beads valued at a few shillings. Those furs had a good market in Europe.

Other important economic activities in New England and the Middle Colonies were the distilling of rum, paper manufacture, sugar refining, and the tanning of leathers. Building industries such as brick making, the manufacture of glass, trinkets and beads for the trade with the natives, the manufacture of furniture, the printing of books, were also important.

The South

Most of the South was colonized by British aristocrats who were granted huge tracks of land as proprietors. These nobles, as Lord Baltimore did in Maryland, laid out their colonies in large land holdings. The climate contributed to the establishment of the monopoly on the land. The development of staple crops like tobacco and rice on a large scale demanded both extensive fields and numerous laborers. These expenses

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were above the possibilities of most immigrants, so wealthy aristocratic immigrants were in control from the beginning. To this contributed the land policy that granted more land to the proprietor who brought more laborers.

As indentured servitude resulted relatively expensive, during the Seventeenth Century large-scale plantation agriculture advanced slowly in comparison to small farming. A yeoman class of small farmers grew. They worked their fields, which averaged about six hundred acres, together with their families. All this changed rapidly by the end of the century. Declining prices ruined many farmers, a process increased by the massive importation of African slaves. Unable to compete with the slave system, the small farmers migrated or became "poor whites". These farmers constituted an important part of the white population of the South (like in the other areas) during the colonial period. Pushed towards the west by the extension of the plantation system, they settled in the Piedmont region. Later, they were forced to move beyond the mountains.

In this way, the South evolved into the land of large plantations of thousands of acres and hundreds of slaves. The development of this economic system prevented the growth of towns, and promoted a distinctly rural life of scattered plantations, in contrast to New England, where occupation usually began by founding a town. The planters built their system with the help of the feudal rights of entail and primogeniture, feudal laws transported from Britain that prevented their lands from being divided. According to these laws, an estate could not be seized or sold for taxes or debts and the land had to pass intact to the eldest son upon the death of the owner. These feudal laws lasted until the independence.

A happy combination of geography and climate made the Southern Colonies an ideal region for farming. Here the coastal plain was vast and fertile, rain was plentiful, and rivers were wide. Summers were hot and the growing season lasted from six months in Maryland to about nine in South Carolina. The south developed as an agrarian region where staple crops were raised in large plantations by African slaves. Supervision was essential for slave labor and an overseer was too expensive unless he had twenty slaves under him, which encouraged the development of large plantations.

The first staple was tobacco, which was cultivated by the Native Americans in much before the coming of the Europeans. It found a good market in Europe and elsewhere yielding good profits. As tobacco is a sensitive plant that exhausts the soil quickly so the planters had to move, clear more land and start again on virgin soil every few years. Land was cheap and this system contributed to the colonization of lands in the west.

Rice was grown in the swamps near the rivers of the coastal plain. Dikes were built so that these areas could be drained or flooded at will. The work of tending the fields was hard. The slaves had to walk through the mud under a hot sun to plant the seeds, to pull out the weeds, and to harvest the crop. Separating the grain from the chaff was also a difficult hand processes. Malaria and other diseases decimated the slaves working in the rice fields. The workers' mortality rate was very high but profits were good and fresh slaves could be bought to replace those rotten alive in the infested rice field. Indigo also became a successful crop during the Eighteenth Century. This industry was another depending completely on the, exploitation of slaves. The conditions under which indigo was produced were as inhuman as those associated with rice growing were.

Cotton, too, was another important crop in the South. But the labor of separating the seed from the fiber was so hard (it took a worker a full day to clean only one pound of raw cotton), that the cotton market and culture remained restricted, until the New Englander Eli Whitney invented the labor saving Cotton Gin in 1793.

Although some subsistence farming was practiced in the plantations, the economic life of the South was dominated by the cultivation of tobacco, rice and indigo. These staple crops, to which cotton was later added, were produced on a large scale for export and made of the South a monoculture agrarian region, the single crop system that is still such a serious handicap to the life and prosperity of many countries.

Indentured servitude did not prove productive in the South. Chattel slavery possessed various advantages. The Blacks could be found in large numbers in the thickly populated Africa. Coming from more advanced cultures than the nomadic Native Americans did, they were better qualified for intensive agriculture. Besides, the Blacks were slaves for life as well as their descendants. Slave owners defended slavery on the ground that the Blacks belonged to an inhuman condition, and that they were being enslaved in order to be civilized and Christianized.

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The first shipload of African captives was sold into slavery in Jamestown in 1619 and by 1690, there were about 20,000 scattered throughout the colonies, most of them in the South. New England merchants took an active part in the slave trade. Land rose in price and rich plantation owners monopolized the best soils. The poor farmer who worked in the fields with his own hands had to compete in the tobacco market with the cheaper labor of slaves. Often he became a “poor white” who retired into the backcountry.

In the South there were few villages, both stores and taverns were infrequent. The large plantations lined both sides of the navigable rivers. Ships did not load at some coast town, but sailed for miles inland, stopping at the private wharves of planters, who bartered their tobacco, rice, indigo, furs and cotton for British manufactured goods. Most of the commerce of the south was with Great Britain. To the metropolis, this region shipped its staples, essentially tobacco, also rice, indigo and some furs, receiving in return wine, iron, clothing, and manufactured goods.

Colonial Society

Colonial society was characterized by marked social differences and sharp conflicts. The ruling classes of Great Britain transplanted to North America their hierarchical class stratification. In all the colonies, besides the royal governors, officials, and magistrates, there was a wealthy aristocracy backed by the Crown who monopolized political power and enjoyed all kinds of privileges and sinecures. Composed of rich merchants, landowners, and the clergy this aristocracy constituted, together with the British interests, the ruling classes of colonial North America. They lived in the finest houses; they had wage laborers or rent-paying peasants, or indentured servants or Black slaves working for them. This aristocratic people voted, elected themselves to positions in government, made the laws and ran government according to their interests.

In the Southern and Middle Colonies, this aristocracy was mostly composed of great landowners who left their pestilent fields largely in the care of overseers and enjoyed a pleasant life in the coastal towns. In New England, the political power of the wealthy merchants, the moneylenders, and the Puritan clergy was greater. From the very beginning of the colonial period, the Southerners bore a more aristocratic appearance than the upper classes of the North who had a marked bourgeois outlook in manners and behavior. The tidewater aristocracy kept close ties with the Mother Country and aped the manners of the British aristocracy. The status conferred by money and rank gave special privileges to the propertied in all spheres of life. In church, for instance, the best seats were for those with most money, and the poorest seats for those with little or no money. The best seats were separated from the others by a balustrade so that there would be no contact with the “vulgar”. In the same line, punishments for offences depended upon what the rank of the offender was.

The small farmers, called yeomen in England, the artisans, and the lesser tradesmen were next in rank to the upper classes. The small farmers constituted a large group in the colonies, mainly in the backcountry. They were the vanguard of the movement to the West. With his family, the pioneer farmer left the older settlements to establish new homes in the forest. Very often the family made a journey of many miles on foot, taking with them only what they could carry on their backs— a rifle, an ax, a hoe, and a bag of corn, as tradition tells. Until a log cabin could be built, the family found what shelter it could. Working hard, they cleared a site in the forest, built a log house, and started farming. And it often resulted that most of the fruits of the farmer’s toil went to the hands of the money lender who had provided the necessary capital to begin, to the hands of the land speculator, to the payment of the quit rents to the lord of the land, or to the payment of the high taxes imposed by colonial governments controlled by the tidewater aristocracy.

The farmers resented this exploitation and their struggle against the tidewater aristocracy was open and violent. Occasionally, the angry frontiersmen banded together and marched on the coast towns with their rifles in their hands. Although always crushed by colonial soldiers, these rebellions were a sign of the deep class contradictions of colonial society.

Below this middle class lay the class of wage laborers, the free workers subjected to capitalist exploitation in a number of industries, the various manufactures, shipping industry, fishing, etc. Apart from the “freedom” to starve or work for wages, the wage laborers had no political or social rights at all. The employers set wages and hours as they pleased. The work hours were long and exhausting. There was an ideal situation for employers to exploit their workers. Wages averaged \$2.00 a week. The workers were disfranchised and without trade unions and so, they stood defenseless in front of the arbitrary employer’s discipline, lacking protection against unemployment, sickness, accidents, and old age. Those who could not pay their debts were thrown into the debtor’s prisons.

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Next were the indentured servants, white laborers subjected to temporary slavery. Being their social position in no way better than that of the African slaves, their only advantage resulted from the possibility to become free if they survived their period of servitude.

At the bottom of society were the Black slaves, the most abused and exploited of all the people of the colonies. They were slaves for life as well as their children. Even in the rare cases in which some of them won their freedom rampant racism did not let them rise in society and fated them to poverty.

Colonial Church

The existence of a welter of conflicting sects among the settlers of America prevented the establishment of a strong national official Church. This was an important factor for the socioeconomic development of the region, since life was not completely under the paralyzing influence of an overwhelming religious power, as was the case in Latin America. Nevertheless, the power of the Church was great, especially in Puritan New England.

In New England the Puritan Congregationalist Church was a state Church supported by taxes paid by the population. The Puritans held a position of immense power and influence. The activities of the Church were so intertwined with those of the state that the government was virtually a theocracy. In cases of heresy, the Church government excommunicated and the civil government imposed corresponding punishments. On the other hand, the church taught obedience to the civil authority.

The Puritan Congregationalist Church of New England was especially intolerant. Puritanism was based on Calvin's doctrine of predestination. The few, the elect, were predestined by God for eternal salvation. The many were predestined for eternal damnation. The prosperity achieved by the businessman was evidence of God's approval. Based on this principle (highly favorable to the rich), the Congregational Church did not admit all to membership, although it required Church attendance of all.

Rival religious sects and those who apposed the autocratic rule of the Puritan clique were persecuted. The Quakers, who refused to accept rank and to pay for the support of the established Church, were persecuted. Their books were publicly burned and the authorities applied a drastic anti-Quaker code. Numerous opponents of Puritan theocracy like Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson were banished.

The Puritans also carried out witchcraft persecutions. The first New England "witch" was killed in Connecticut in 1647, and there were subsequent executions throughout New England in the following years. In 1692, the town of Salem was convulsed by hysteria. Nineteen people were accused of witchcraft, tried publicly and executed.

The Middle Colonies were a hodgepodge of religious denominations. Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, the Church of England, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Quakers, the Catholic refugees and the numerous German sects divided the population into many religious groups to allow a state Church in any of the Middle Colonies in the early years.

In the South, the Church of England (Anglicanism) prevailed. By 1692, the Maryland assembly made the Church of England the established religion of the colony. Religious dissenters were forbidden by law. There were frequent persecutions. The Church of England was also established by law in other Southern colonies. During the Eighteenth Century Anglicanism made significant gains in the Northern and Middle Colonies. Anglicanism was also a state religion. Membership in the state Church was compulsory and people had to pay taxes to support the Church. The Anglican Church was also granted one-seventh of the public lands.

Education was mostly under the control of the churches. Illiteracy ran very high, perhaps more than 85 percent. Women, in particular, were barred from most of the colleges.

Colonial Government

Taking into consideration the degree of self-government enjoyed by the settlers, by the middle of the Seventeenth Century there were three types of colonies: the chartered colonies, the proprietary colonies, and the royal colonies. In the chartered colonies, colonial affairs were in the hands of a number of shareholders operating under the authority of a charter granted by the king. Under the proprietary system, the proprietor obtained a charter from the king, established the colony at his own risk, and appointed its officials. In the royal colonies, affairs were directed by crown officials. During the colonial period, the Crown converted most

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of the colonies to royal government. After 1752, except for Connecticut and Rhode Island, the rest were royal colonies.

The events of the English Bourgeois Revolution (1640-1688) allowed British officialdom little time to devote to the administration of the American colonies, which conducted their affairs with some independence. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the Crown and Parliament began the systematic direction of colonial trade and appointed special agencies to administer the colonies.

The English controlled their colonies through the autocratic Board of Trade and Plantation which had the responsibility of enforcing the policies of Great Britain to the American colonies, of approving or disapproving the acts of Colonial Legislatures, of granting land titles, and of negotiating with the Native Americans. The board conducted its business in London. After 1766, most of these powers were transferred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The English kings arbitrarily appointed royal governors to rule over the colonies. The governor was the Crown's chief representative in the colony and possessed broad powers. He could summon and dissolve the assembly, veto its legislation and appoint officials. Royal governors, however, had to consider the claims of local aristocracies.

The royal governors presided over the colonial provincial legislatures. The legislatures were divided into two houses: the council and the assembly. Next to the governor, the council was the most important element in the governmental machinery of a royal colony. Appointed by the governor, it was his advisory body, the highest court of appeals in the colony, and the upper house of the legislature.

The colonial assembly, or lower house, was elected by the propertied as their representative body. Colonial assemblies gained the right after 1680 of initiating all colonial laws. They also gained some control of provincial finance by winning the right to supervise the expenditure of the money. These provincial assemblies were universally dominated by big landowners and merchants, some of the former maintaining their seats without election as hereditary legislators from their respective landholdings. The right to vote for assembly members was limited to free white male property owners who belonged to the official Church of the colony. To be elected to any office in the government or as a member of the assembly, there were higher qualifications.

In the town and village councils, there was more democracy than in the provincial assemblies, although the local councils also had many property qualifications restricting the right of suffrage. This budding local democracy was particularly marked in New England where small farms, instead of big plantations, provided the basis of agriculture. The political unit in New England was the town, a subdivision of the colony. In these towns, the freemen members of the local Protestant Church voted in the "town meeting" on questions of local government, elected executive officers, who were called selectmen, and chose the representatives of the town to the colonial legislature.

2. First American Burgueos Revolution.

2.1 Main important economic, political and cultural features of the Therteen Colonies.

The Colonies before the Revolution

Since the Seventeenth Century, Great Britain was engaged in constant wars against the other European powers. Busy at war, the British Crown was not able to enforce its autocratic Laws of Trade and had to resort to the policy of "salutary neglect", the practice of "letting sleeping dogs lie". The colonists took advantage of British lax control over colonial affairs and developed their economies.

During the colonial period, the exports of the Northern Colonies to Great Britain were far less than their imports, but the merchants prospered despite this adverse balance of trade by engaging in slave trade, making rum, exploiting the fisheries, and manufacturing for export and for the local markets. Northern merchants had little trouble with the Laws of Trade as long as they were mildly enforced. New England and the Middle Colonies exported large amounts of cereals and lumber to the European continent and the West Indies. Colonial trade was not restricted to the British West Indies, trade with the French, Dutch, and Spanish islands being very profitable. This trade was prohibited in 1733 by an act of Parliament, but this prohibition could not be enforced effectively.

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The system of Triangular Trade, described above, on which depended the prosperity of New England and the Middle Colonies in a large measure had been built outside the mercantilist walls erected around the empire. By the middle of the Eighteenth Century, the continental colonies had outgrown British mercantilist system. At that time, British West Indies were unable to supply them with enough sugar and molasses. The empire, especially since it revolved around regulations favoring Great Britain, was unable to absorb all the finished and raw commodities that the American colonies needed to export.

During the colonial period the American colonists became the best customers of British manufacturers. Thanks to the Navigation Acts, the expanding colonial market was protected from competition of French, Dutch, and others. The fact that the colonies offered a market relatively free from competition from French, Dutch and others, allowed British businessmen to have great advantages vis-à-vis their colonial counterparts. This resulted in a large unfavorable balance of trade for the colonial people and a significant source of wealth for the British ruling classes.

During the colonial period, colonial, population underwent a very fast growth, almost doubling every twenty-five years. There were about 300,000 people in the mainland colonies in 1688; by the 1760's, the number had increased to about 3,000,000, more than half a million of them Black slaves. Most of the population centered in New England and the Middle Colonies.

North American colonies enjoyed political rights that were unknown to the inhabitants of other colonial regions. The fact that the Crown was prevented from taking a direct part in planting the original colonies let the wealthy promoters who funded the enterprises to exercise relative control over colonial institutions. To this should be added that the desire for a more abundant life, free from British oppression, was the leading motivation for many immigrants. As a result, the colonies enjoyed a considerable degree of self-government by the end of the Seventeenth Century.

For the remainder of the colonial period the Mother Country sought to increase its authority by imposing the royal type of colonial government. The royal governors were given the power of vetoing the bills passed by assemblies, and laws approved by the governors had to be sent to Great Britain where the Privy Council exercised the right of allowing or disallowing them. Despite these restrictions to the rights of the colonial assemblies, their very existence was, undoubtedly, a major achievement. The British colonies that revolted in 1776 possessed representative assemblies that made concerted resistance infinitely easier. H. Aptheker wrote,

These colonies had grown so that their numbers were pressing on three million, and while England had been busy subduing her rivals and conquering the world (with some help from the colonies), those colonies had developed rather considerable economies and viable political entities and a clear feeling of solidarity connoting rudimentary nationality.

Mercantilism

The British Empire was organized under the principles of mercantilism. According to the mercantilist theory, the function of the colonies was to produce raw material for the use of the Mother Country, to consume its manufactures and to foster its shipping. This implied that the colonies were to remain dependent agricultural regions, in a position of perpetual economic inferiority, joined to the industrialized Mother Country. Such principles were made into laws when Parliament passed the Laws of Trade, or Navigation Acts, in the Seventeenth Century. Sir Francis Bernard, the royal governor to Massachusetts, wrote,

The two great objects of Great Britain in regard to the American trade must be: (1) to oblige her American subjects to take from Great Britain only all the manufactures and European goods which she can supply them with, (2) to regulate the foreign trade of the Americans so that the profits there may finally center in Great Britain or be applied to the improvement of her empire.

It has been stated before that the Navigation Acts required the colonists to send most of their products to Britain and to purchase almost all their manufactured goods in the same market. As a result, British merchants and manufacturers were placed in a position to determine the prices of what the colonists bought and sold. For the remainder of the colonial period the British government sought to tighten the screws

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of commercial monopoly upon the colonists and to devise means of more strictly enforcing the Navigation Acts.

The French and Indian War (1756-1763) was the last of a series of Anglo-French wars that began in 1689. By the Treaty of Paris, concluded in February 1763, Great Britain won from France all of Canada and the interior east of Mississippi except for the port of New Orleans. Spain had to give up east and west Florida to the British. By that treaty, Great Britain became the greatest economic, naval, and colonial power. The British Crown and Parliament then set out to consolidate their holdings and reorganize the imperial system throughout the world.

The basic aim of this colonial reorganization was to centralize the administration of the colonies and exploit them even more. This new trend of British imperial policy exacerbated the latent contradictions between the metropolis and her North American colonies, hastening the beginning of the conflict.

There were irresistible forces working toward that conflict. The rise of Great Britain to world supremacy not only made it possible for the Crown and Parliament, now free from dangerous rivals, to concentrate on how best to plunder their possessions, it also contributed to the revolutionary transformation of English home economy. The rising output of manufactured goods required increasing outlets, and the North American possessions, with a rapidly growing population, offered a particularly attractive market for British exports. The pressing need for wider markets was translated into British efforts to monopolize colonial trade effectively and to destroy colonial budding industries for the benefit of British merchants and manufacturers.

So long as the French occupied Canada, the colonists were drawn close to the Mother Country by the threat of an alien neighbor. Great Britain's victory in 1763 also meant for the continental colonies that a hostile Spain no longer held Florida, and an aggressive France was removed from the north and from the west. British military presence, up to them considered a safeguard by the colonists, now became more a cause for resentment.

The French and Indian war allowed many colonials to train in warfare and promoted the growth of a feeling of nationality among the colonists, because men from different colonies fought together. There were even efforts for uniting the colonies.

Unlike other colonial possessions the British colonies in North America were numerously settled, they were not surrounded by the sea, and so were not thoroughly dependent upon the British Navy. The American colonists were not a white minority surrounded by Black slaves, as was the case of the British planters of Jamaica. Therefore, they did not depend upon Great Britain for special protection. Besides, over one third of the white colonial population was non-British in origin. Many of these, especially the Irish and the Dutch, were unsympathetic to the British rule for historical reasons.

Aptheker writes,

...in the midst of swift growth and mounting pride the release from enemies to the south and the north and the west, this mounting separateness, in the midst of a situation wherein even ancient fetters were increasingly resented, came the postwar British policy of centralization, consolidation, and intensified exploitation. Restraint evoked resistance; resistance produced punishment; punishment caused resentment. Resentment was met by forcible repression; forcible repression led to revolution.

This situation is graphically stated by a contemporary. In 1770, Benjamin Franklin, later a leading patriot, wrote for the readers of the *London Public Advertiser* two fables that constitute a brilliant picture of the developing conflict between Great Britain and the North American colonies. The first fable went this way:

A herd of cows had long afforded plenty of milk, butter and cheese to an avaricious farmer, who grudged them the grass they subsisted on, and at length mowed it to make money of the hay, leaving them to shift for food as they could, and yet with unreasonableness, still expected to milk them as before, but the cows, offended resolved for the future to suckle one another.

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Franklin's second fable:

A lion's whelp was put on board a Guinea ship bound for America as a present to a friend in that country. It was tame and harmless as a kitten, and therefore not confined, but suffered to walk about the ship at pleasure. A stately, full grown English mastiff belonging to the captain, despising the weakness of the young lion, frequently took its food by force; and often turned it out to its lodging box, when he had a mind to repose there himself. The young lion nevertheless grew daily in size and strength, and the voyage being long, he came at last a more equal match for the mastiff; who continuing his insults, received a stunning blow from the lion's paw that fetched his skin over his ears, and deterred him from any future contest with such growing strength; regretting that he had not rather secured its friendship than provoked its enmity.

To protect the monopoly of British manufactures, Parliament forbade the colonists to export colonial wool, woolens and hats from one colony to another. In 1750, the erection of plating or slitting mills was prohibited. This act was intended to freeze the growth of the iron industry. The law required North American iron masters to send their iron to Great Britain to be worked there and returned to the colonies in manufactured form. An even more serious blow was the enumeration of iron in 1767. Most of the forges, despite the abundance of cheap ore, were closed. A Bostonian complained that

A colonist cannot make a button, a horse shoe; nor a hob-nail but some sooty iron-monger or respectable button-maker of Britain shall howl and squeal that his honor worships is most egregiously maltreated, injured, cheated and robbed by the rascally American Republicans.

By 1763, Great Britain started a serious legislative and administrative effort to accomplish the effective subjection of the colonies. An essential part of this effort was a series of measures aimed at enforcing the Navigation Acts.

The condition of colonial customs was disastrous. Analysts conclude that to collect two thousand pounds in customs duties in the colonies cost the British government eighth thousand pounds. Smuggling was out of control and overtly tolerated by British officials. The chief posts in the colonial customs had been made sinecures and were filled by placement that lived in Great Britain and their poorly paid agents were easily bribed by the merchants. British officials estimated that, 700,000 pounds worth of merchandise was smuggled annually into the colonies, a serious loss to British merchants and manufacturers as well as to the government itself.

To suppress smuggling the Royal Navy was assigned to coastal patrol work and naval officers were entitled to half the value of all seizures made in the course often forcing the Acts of Trade. To increase the efficiency of the customs, the powers of the Admiralty-Courts were enlarged. In these courts, suspected violators of British commercial laws were tried by a judge without the benefit of a jury, in any part of the kingdom. Customs officials were permitted to use writs of assistance. Writs of assistance were general search warrants to enter any house or to board any ship in search of smuggled goods. In addition, holders of colonial customs jobs were required to take up their posts in the colonies. With these measures, the British policy of vigorously enforcing the trading acts was achieved. While the revenue from American customs in the early 1760's accounted for about 2,000 pounds per year, from 1768 to 1774 it averaged over 30,000 a year.

While the Crown attempted to suppress smuggling, it also sought to strengthen the monopolistic position of British mercantile interests in the colonies. With this aim, higher duties were imposed on important products in 1764. Besides, British manufacturers and merchants were favored by the enumeration of lumber, raw silk, potashes, whale fins, coffee, and pimento. North American merchants were also forbidden to import wine directly from the Madeiras and Canary Islands.

Most of the colonists were land hungry. The best lands of the colonized regions had been vested over aristocratic Crown favorites or had been grabbed by land speculators and planters. As tobacco quickly exhausted the soil, the planters were in constant need for fresh lands. When the French and Indian War ended, it was clear that there would shortly be a stampede for the West, to the territories newly obtained from France. But in the very year of the victory over France, the British government issued a proclamation which established a line of demarcation. According to this, nobody could settle or purchase lands west of the Allegheny Mountains. Parliament wanted to prevent the colonists from spreading too far, out of British control. People understood that it also favored British land speculators who could claim the lands before the pioneers or local land speculators could.

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In 1733, the British government passed the Molasses Act, which imposed a duty of sixpence per gallon upon foreign molasses imported into British America. It was directed to stop trade between the Northern Colonies and the foreign West Indies for the tax of sixpence a gallon was prohibitive.

New England and the Middle Colonies carried a significant trade with the French, Dutch and Spanish West Indies to which they exported large quantities of lumber, fish, flour, and horses, in return from molasses and money. It was largely because of this trade that the northern colonists were able to continue buying British manufactures in spite of their adverse balance of trade with the Mother Country. The molasses was manufactured into rum to purchase slaves at the African coast. The slaves were carried to the West Indies to be exchanged for money or for more molasses.

Against the Molasses Act, the merchants resorted to smuggling. After an unsuccessful effort to enforce the act in Massachusetts in the 1740's, foreign molasses was smuggled into the Northern Colonies in an ever-increasing quantity.

It was in part to raise some funds for a colonial army and partly to stop smuggling that the Revenue Act—or Sugar Act—of 1764 was passed. This measure, which replaced the poorly enforced Molasses Act of 1733, reduced the duty on foreign molasses imported into the British colonies to three pence a gallon. But at the same time the act seriously enforced the British customs service so that the duty could be effectively collected.

The effects of the Sugar Act were disastrous for the Northern Colonies. While the price of their staples fell, the price of sugar and molasses rose. The loss of the important market of the foreign West Indies threatened both merchants and farmers with ruin. The menace of the Sugar Act led the colonists to unite in their demand for free trade with the West Indies. Boston merchants appointed a corresponding committee to coordinate the opposition of the Northern merchants to the Sugar Act. The Massachusetts House of Representatives likewise appointed a committee to correspond with other colonial assemblies on the matter.

In 1751, Parliament passed an act that declared paper money illegal in New England. In 1764, the Currency Act extended to all the colonies the prohibition to issue paper money as a legal tender. There was little money in circulation in the colonies, mostly a mixed collection of Spanish and Portuguese coins. The lack of an appropriate circulating medium was a serious hindrance to the economic growth of the colonies and contributed to keep colonial debtors enslaved by British creditors. Under the pressure of the debtor interests, colonial legislatures had resorted to issue paper money, which was strongly opposed by colonial and British creditors. It was to protect those interests that Parliament prohibited the circulation of Colonial paper money.

In March 1765, Parliament passed the Stamp Act, the first direct tax that Parliament placed upon the colonies. According to its provisions, colonists would require stamps to legalize all sorts of documents and licenses. Therefore, people from the colonies would have to pay in silver to exchange property, engage in commerce, obtain a college diploma, marry, etc., etc. Violators of the law were to be tried without jury in the Admiralty Courts.

In the same year, Parliament passed a Quartering Act that arranged for the housing of British troops in the colonies. With the intention of enforcing the laws passed, the Crown had formed a standing army in the colonies that amounted to nearly 6,000 troops. According to the Quartering Act of 1765, where barracks were insufficient, public inns and private houses might be used by the military.

The reaction to the colonial population to these acts was violent. Large demonstrations of protests and riots broke out in all the colonies. The places where the stamps were stored were attacked and the packages of stamps were burned, tax collectors were chased by angry crowds and their houses and properties were wrecked or burned. Colonial oligarchs—who began to be known as Tories—also faced the anger of the people.

In May 1765, Patrick Henry, a leader of the opposition to Virginia's tidewater aristocrats, made a historic speech in the Virginia's House of Burgesses. He declared "...in former times Tarkin and Julius had their Brutus and he did not doubt but some good American would stand up in favor of his country", in an allusion to George III, King of England. Then Henry urged the House to adopt seven resolves he had prepared stating that Americans had all the rights English men did and protested taxation without representation. Most of Henry's radical resolves were passed with the opposition of conservatives. This conflict between radicals and conservatives was also revealed in the other colonial legislatures.

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In October 1765, the Stamp Act Congress met at New York City Hall. Representatives of nine of the colonies, after several days of discussion, adopted a Declaration of Rights, a Petition to the King and a Memorial to Parliament. The British authorities rejected the legality of this congress and its documents, but they were published and were warmly welcomed by public opinion. The Declaration acknowledged that the colonies owed allegiance to the Crown, claimed all the rights of Englishmen, and asserted that among these rights was freedom from taxation without proper representation. It also insisted on trial by jury and complained of the burdensomeness of the taxes and the Acts of Trade. The Declaration also urged the repeal of the Stamp Act.

The Stamp Act was to take effect in November 1765. By then, tax collectors had been forced to resign by public pressure and most of the existing stamp stocks had been destroyed. Facing such resistance, the British government repealed the Stamp Act the following year though it asserted its right to tax the colonies.

During the years that preceded the Revolution, many organizations were formed to organize resistance. They grew out of protest movements connected with the struggle of the farmers against the tidewater oligarchies, and the fight of the urban workers and merchants for political and economic rights. They acted against provincial legislatures and governors controlled by conservative local aristocracies. In time, people began to understand that the British government was the actual enemy. Some of these organizations were Vox Populi, the Sons of Neptune, the Sons of Liberty, and the Daughters of Liberty. The Sons of Liberty was the most numerous and widely extended of these groups. It included merchants, lawyers and urban workers. In the struggle against the Stamp Act, the Sons of Liberty developed into a very efficient organization. They had regular meetings and efficient committees. They elected delegates to enforce decisions and had a press to make their decisions quickly known. The Sons of Liberty created the Committees of Correspondence, which played a leading role in unleashing the Revolution. They helped keep the colonies in touch by corresponding about their common grievances.

The defeat of the Stamp Act by popular protest action angered Parliament. To teach the colonists a lesson and reassert its authority over the colonies, this legislative body passed the Townshend Act (actually a compound of several acts) which was to take effect in late 1767. It introduced duties on imported glass, lead, paint, paper and tea. The acts included a series of coercive measures that seriously threatened the rights of colonial governments and in general the rights of the people of the colonies.

The Townshend duties found concerted and organized resistance in the colonies. The Sons of Liberty were active and so were the committees of correspondence throughout the colonies. The colonists also began to organize provincial conventions to protest British policy. There were also political strikes in which workers refused to unload British transports or to build fortifications for them. Throughout the colonies, there were clashes of protesters and soldiers. Informers were routinely tarred, feathered and paraded by the streets by angry crowds of people. On March 5 1770, the British soldiers shot at a disarmed crowd who attacked them with snowballs. Five people were killed, and six were wounded. One of the dead was Crispus Attucks, an escaped slave. The Committees of Correspondence quickly spread the news of the Boston Massacre arousing the patriotic spirit of the Continentals.

Organized resistance and the opposition of British merchants, whose businesses were harmed, led to the repeal of all the Townshend duties, except that on tea —older duties on sugar, molasses, wine, etc., remained. For many in the colonies, the repeal of the Townshend duties was a victory and the conflict seemed settled. Many were afraid of too radical mass action, especially the merchants, and looked for conciliation with the British authorities. British rulers believed that the conflict was over. They did not realize that the most difficult moments were still to come.

2.2 The war of Independence. Causes and consequences. The Nature of the Revolution

W. Foster considers that the American Revolution was the first one of the American hemispheric revolutions that continued into the next century, a revolt for colonial national liberation against burdensome domestic conditions and pressing grievances. This hemispheric revolution was part of the worldwide bourgeois revolution, the general movement from feudalism to capitalism. He wrote in his book *The Negro People in American History* (1954),

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The first American Revolution was a violent economic political and military collision between the young capitalism striving to grow and acquire independence and the dominant British capitalism, which sought to stifle and restrict it.

And he characterized it as a bourgeois revolution, with strong democratic currents within it.

H.M. Morais summarized his analysis of the conflict in *The Struggle for American Freedom* (1944) as follows:

The first American Revolution was the product of two general movements: The struggle for self-government and national independence and the struggle among American people themselves for a more democratic order. The Revolution therefore had an external aspect, the colonial war for liberation against Britain, and an internal aspect, the mass' upsurge against anti-democratic elements. It ushered in the modern era of revolutionary struggle and became the prototype of a whole series of bourgeois-democratic upheavals in Europe and colonial uprisings throughout the world.

On this important topic, H. Aptheker writes that:

The American Revolution was the result of the interpenetration of three currents: The fundamental conflict of interests between the rulers of the colonizing power and the vast majority of the colonists; the class stratification within the colonies themselves and the resulting class struggles that marked colonial history which almost always found the British imperial power as a bulwark of the reactionary or the conservative interests in such struggles; and the developing sense of American nationality transcending class lines, which resulted from the varied origins of the colonies' peoples, their physical separation from England, the different fauna and flora and climate of their surroundings, their different problems and interests, their own developing culture and psychology and even language; their own common history, and from their own experience of common hostility—varying in degree with place and time—towards the powers-that-be in England. These currents were inter-related; each reacted upon the other.

The Revolution of the Thirteen Colonies was chiefly an anti-colonial war resulting from antagonistic contradictions that developed between the ruling classes of Great Britain and most of the inhabitants of the colonies. In the main a colonial revolution, it did not bring about deep social transformations. Its chief limitation was its inability to abolish chattel slavery. The conflict of interests between the British and the North American wealthy classes was central. The British bourgeoisie tried to preserve and extend their control of colonial economy, mainly by monopolizing its trade, and repress its growth. The young and rising colonial bourgeoisie, engaged in an effort to have power over their market as a necessary premise to its development, was forced to fight for political freedom.

The fight against British rule was related to the efforts directed to the democratization of American society. The British power always stood in support of the reactionary forces and ways of life, as was the case of vestiges of feudalism on land tenure. Consequently, the struggle for independence and democracy was necessarily fought against British despotism and home based tyranny.

The Revolution became a mass endeavor actively involving the workers and the farmers of the colonies. Aptheker points out that "...the progressive and democratic content of the effort attracted the masses; the participation of the masses helped guarantee and enhance the democratic content of the effort". This author also makes emphasis on the fact that the conflict resulted from profound socioeconomic contradictions which could not be resolved by compromise; that only the elimination of antagonism at the root of the contradiction could remove it; that transformation, not reformation was needed.

The Conflict Begins

The 1772 economic depression led to a revival of colonial opposition. In March, the armed schooner Gaspee that was chasing smugglers ran aground on a narrow spit of land near Providence, Rhode Island. That night a group of colonists set fire to the ship. The hostility of the colonial inhabitants did not allow the British authorities to apprehend the offenders. In 1773, Parliament passed the notorious Tea Act. It granted the East India Company the right to reship its heavy stocks of tea to the American colonies without paying regular import duties in England and to sell it directly to its agencies in the colonies. The Tea Act allowed the agents of the East India Company to undersell other merchants, including the smugglers, and establish a virtual monopoly of that important trade. The granting of the monopoly on tea to a British company aroused a fierce

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opposition from the colonists. It is important to note that the East India Company also controlled the trade in chinaware, drugs, calicoes, spices, and silks to Great Britain, and that if this monopoly in the tea trade with America could be established then a similar monopoly by the same company might be established in all other goods. The struggle against the Tea Act was a struggle against British monopolization of American trade.

The Company dispatched its tea to the ports of Charleston Philadelphia, Boston and New York, but mass opposition made its sale impossible. Large mass meetings were held in all the big ports and a general, boycott to British tea was declared. In New York and Philadelphia because of people's protests, it had to be returned to England. In Boston, on the night of December 16, 1773, a party of colonists disguised as Native Americans jumped aboard the ships that had brought the tea, ripped open the chests, and dumped the tea into the harbor. This "Boston Tea Party", as it came to be called in history, cost the East India Company about £ 17 000.

The British government responded with the Intolerable Acts. The Boston Port was closed to shipping until the East India Company had been reimbursed for its losses. This Act was received in the colonies with huge demonstrations similar to those that had greeted the Stamp Act. The Boston Town Meeting instructed its Committee of Correspondence to send a circular letter to the ether towns and colonies protesting the Act, pledging Boston's determination not to yield, and asking for support. The majority of the population of the big towns organized resistance, boycott, and unity with the Bostonians. Relief came to Boston from all over the colonies. Cattle and fish came from New England, wheat from Quebec, rice from the Carolinas.

Parliament also passed the Quebec Act that enlarged the province of Quebec to include the territory north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi, ignoring the land claims of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia. The Crown also tried to conciliate Canadians to make Canada a place from which to make of Canada a safe place from which the repression of the rebellious colonies to the south could be launched. In September 1774, the King wrote to his Prime Minister "The die is now cast, the colonies must either submit or triumph..." A few weeks later, he insisted that New England was "...in a state of rebellion..." and that "...blows must decide whether they are going to be subject to this country or independent."

The colonists organized resistance to the Intolerable Acts with forms of action developed in previous struggles: Committees of Correspondence, boycotts, provincial conventions. They organized also groups of "minute men", militias ready for duty at a minute's notice. The next step was the organization of revolutionary provincial congresses and, in 1774, the First Continental Congress.

The First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, from September 5 through October 26, 1774. It consisted of 56 delegates from 12 colonies. Most were lawyers, planters and merchants. There were radicals and conservatives in Congress with the former gaining ground quickly with the aggravation of the crisis.

The First Continental Congress delivered addresses to the King, to the British people, and to the continental colonies that had no representation at the Congress. It also adopted a Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances and a plan of Association. The Declaration demanded all the rights of Englishmen for the colonists, the repeal of the Intolerable Acts, insisted on the principle of "no taxation without representation" and asserted that the colonists were entitled to life, liberty and property. Finally, the Declaration proclaimed the decision of the colonists to boycott British products. The enforcement of the Association was entrusted to local committees of inspection, which became basic in organizing and conducting the Revolution.

Governor Dunmore of Virginia, in a letter written in December 1774, made a good description of the developing situation:

A committee has been chosen in every country, whose business is to carry the association of the Congress into execution, which committee assumes the authority to inspect the book invoices and all other secrets., of merchants; to watch the conduct of every inhabitant., to interrogate them respecting all matters... and to stigmatize... such as they find transgressing what they are now hardly enough to call the laws of Congress... every county is now arming a company for the avowed purpose of protecting their Committees, and to be employed against government; if occasion require.

The majority of the population gave full support to the Association but many merchants violated the agreement and continued trading with England. First, they were visited by individuals and by delegations who tried to change their minds. Then, the names of offenders were published in the newspapers and the

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community refused to have any dealings with them. Finally, some kind of physical punishment was directed against them. Usually they were decorated with feathers and paraded through the towns as an example to others who opposed popular will.

In the evening of April 18, 1775, General Gage sent out a force to confiscate military stores that the patriots had gathered at Concord, a small town near Boston, and to arrest two political refugees, John Hancock and Samuel Adams. The British regulars marched to Concord by way of Lexington, a little village. The revolutionaries learned of the plan and Paul Revere and Rufus Daws rode at top speed in their horses to warn the whole countryside of the coming of the British. Very quickly, the local militia was gathered. When the British troops reached Lexington in the early morning of April 19, 1775, they saw a group of minutemen arranged in order for resistance. Pitcairn, the British commander, ordered them to disperse and on their refusal, someone "fired the shot heard round the world". The British fired killing several militiamen, forcing the rest to retreat. From Lexington, the British marched to Concord as planned. However, on their way back, the minutemen, from behind stonewalls, and trees, shot the retreating British killing many. The raid cost the British 273 dead, wounded and missing; the Americans lost 93.

The Revolutionary War had started.

The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775. The delegates this time were elected by revolutionary congresses or conventions. All the colonies were represented. This Congress remained the Congress of the United Colonies and then of the United States throughout the Revolution. In its first weeks, its transformation from a revolutionary consultative body into a revolutionary central government, which had already begun in the first Continental Congress, was completed. Congress assumed the defense colonies, raised armies, directed foreign affairs, and issued money for the troops.

Now the war had already begun, and the news of Lexington and Concord spread with extraordinary speed though the action of hundreds of committees of correspondence that knit the whole continent together. When the delegates to the Second Continental Congress reached Philadelphia, they were escorted into the city by companies of riflemen infantry. The city was decorated with flags inscribed: "Liberty or Death", "Even our Women and Children", it was said, "now talk nothing but of the Glory of fighting suffering and dying for our country."

In May, 1775, Congress resolved, that "these colonies be immediately put into a state of defense", the Massachusetts militia was taken over by Congress; an army of 20 000 men was ordered to be raised and George Washington of Virginia —the most experienced and most distinguished military man of the colonies— was appointed the commanding general. This was a good choice, for George Washington was a man of courage, tenacious and honest.

The Congressional Declaration enumerated the grievances of the colonists and the oppressions of the Crown, and stated:

We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice... Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable...

The rich, conservative colonists were very much worried by the problem of how far was the Revolution to go. Fear for the security of their property moved many to go with the British and against their country. Others considered that British tyranny could be removed and the rule of the wealthy could be maintained. Finally, they went with their people against England. They played an important role in the effort to limit revolutionary changes as far as possible.

For the masses, the movement for independence was related to their interests. While they fought for national independence, their efforts were also directed to overcome debts, to increase their political power, to better economic and social conditions, and, in the case of the slaves and the indentured servants, to obtain their freedom. The struggle of the masses against England was thus identified with the struggle against domestic tyranny and exploitation. The people sought national independence and a more democratic society.

For the rich who joined in the movement against British rule the aim was to attain national independence and to preserve their economic and political domination of America. They wanted "home rule, but to rule at home". For many merchants and planters the war was just a good business. They made profits at

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the expense of starving soldiers and civilians. Those “patriots” took advantage of their nation’s emergency to make money.

The so-called “loyalists”, or “Tories”—the people called them “traitors”—fought in defense of the British cause, which gave the Revolution a civil war aspect. Most of the Tories belonged to the wealthier sector of colonial society—rich landowners and merchants and their direct servants—most of the clergy of the Anglican Church, most of the British mercantile agents, and most of the Crown officialdom in the colonies. After the war, many of them were expropriated and thousands fled to Canada or to other regions of the British Empire.

The Revolution had the decided support of the overwhelming majority of the American people. During the protests against British rule, mass meetings and demonstrations totaled thousands. Besides, if the American patriots had not received the decided support of the vast masses of colonial population, it is doubtful they could have ever defeated Great Britain that was, by that time, the most powerful country of the world.

The small farmers, who formed the majority of colonial population, played a fundamental role in the Revolution. They made up the majority of the fighting forces of the Revolution. Although there was not yet a definitely formed and organized working class in the colonies, the workers also made an important contribution to the revolutionary struggle. The Native Americans did not play any important role in the revolutionary war. Some tribes joined the British and some the Continentals, but most remained neutral to a conflict that would not bring them any benefit, whatever the outcome might be

The African Americans played an important part in the Revolution. Many realized the opportunity that the war offered them to advance their basic demand of manumission. When they were allowed, they eagerly entered the revolutionary army where they fought bravely. Southern delegates to the Continental Congress opposed the enrollment of Blacks in the Continental Army. Such policy was abandoned when the revolutionary leaders realized that thousands of slaves were escaping to the British lines where they had been promised freedom. Some 100 000 succeeded in escaping, though most of them found death or slavery instead of freedom. In January 1776, Washington and his council of generals agreed that free Blacks could serve as soldiers. In many places, Blacks were accepted as substitutes for their masters.

African Americans fought in the revolutionary armed forces sometimes in separate regiments and sometimes together with the whites. It is estimated that about 5 000 Black soldiers and sailors fought in the war and a greater number served as cooks, guides and combat engineers of the Revolutionary Army. They fought in every important battle of the war as soldiers and sailors with outstanding braveness and made many gallant performances as spies. W. Foster in *The Negro People in American History* lists some of these deeds. He mentions Peter Salem, who was a hero of the Battle of Bunker Hill; Salem Poore, who was commended to Congress by fourteen commanders for bravery; James Armistead, who fooled Lord Cornwall and saved the army of Lafayette; Prince, who captured a British general; Deborah Gannett, who fought through the war disguised as a man; and some others.

When the Black could fight for his country and for freedom at the same time, he eagerly did so, but when he was denied that right, he turned to flight, agitation or rebellion. Before, during, and after the war there were frequent plots and uprisings of slaves throughout the colonies. These protests were always mercilessly suppressed by means of the cruelest methods. Considerable areas were disturbed by the activities of maroons. These forms of struggle of the slaves were a permanent feature of the slave system but they were multiplied by the stress and the excitement resulting from the revolutionary struggle. The protests of the slaves and their suppression showed the awful inconsistency in waging a war of national liberation and at the same time keeping 600,000 people in chains.

2.3 The Declaration of independence. The Constitution of 1789.

It took the rebels fifteen months of tough fighting to finally understand and assume that independence was the only possible result of their struggle. In the decades preceding the revolutionary war, the idea of separation from Britain was widespread. However, as it was considered treasonous, it was not openly proclaimed. When the war began, radicals began to advance separatist ideas strongly. They saw independence as the only alternative to complete subjugation. They were helped by the hardships and sufferings imposed by the war and by the abuses committed by the British.

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Revolutionary propaganda also pushed the people towards the idea of independence. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* made an important contribution to the creation of the necessary climate. He stated the idea that a new country should be founded in America, free from the decadence and the miseries of old Europe,

O ye that love mankind! ye that dare oppose not only tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round in the globe (...) O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

In the Second Continental Congress, despite the opposition of many conservatives, the pressure of the people and the representative bodies of the different colonies moved the body towards independence. Besides, many realized that foreign support would not be found in Europe if the goal of the rebels was merely to improve their relations with Great Britain.

Finally, Congress created a committee who work for several days and finally presented a draft document that, after debate, was adopted in July 4, 1776 as the Declaration of Independence of the people of the colonies. It reads:

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness — That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

A list of arbitrary acts committed by the British King follows. Then the formal Declaration of Independence comes.

WE, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

The signatures of the Congressmen followed.

The Declaration of Independence was mainly the work of Thomas Jefferson, a Virginian planter. Congress made few changes to his draft, but substantial ones. In particular, a passage dealing with slavery and slave trade was excluded after the strong resistance of delegates from the slave colonies of the South. Opposition to any attack to slavery or slave trade also came from merchants.

In the introductory statement to the formal declaration of independence, Jefferson and Congress stated philosophical pronouncements that deserve close attention. Aptheker highlights that the document advances three fundamental ideas: that human beings are essentially equal and possess the basic right to life, liberty and happiness; that to obtain and guarantee these rights, men create governments; and that

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Governments destructive of these ends may be, and indeed, should be altered or abolished by the people who then have the right to create a new one which suits their needs.

These are international ideas coming from ancient Greek and Roman cultures and especially developed by European thinkers of the Eighteenth Century. They also come from the English Revolution, and its leading ideologue, John Locke. They are ideas that embody the struggle of humanity against oppression and exploitation and they are timeless and universal.

A fundamental concept advanced by the Declaration and by the historical effort of the Revolution was the right to self-determination of nations, the right of "one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another". The document also rejected the feudal order, aristocracies and monarchies asserting the basic equality among men. A basic concept of the Declaration was its proclamation of the right of the people to rebel against tyranny. In some ways, the ideas passed by the revolutionary Congress were advanced for its time. While Locke emphasized on the individual right of property as basic, Jefferson used the term "the pursuit of happiness" instead, a much more radical and essential human right that is valid until today. Aptheker considers that "It is the idea of man's right to the pursuit of happiness which is the heart of the document's revolutionary enunciation and one which, by its magnificent, timeless generation makes the document meaningful and stirring for all time."

The Declaration of Independence also expresses the basic concepts of the Enlightenment by rejecting medieval concepts of life that regard humans as mere objects that come to the earth to suffer and wait for real life in heavens, in the face of governments that are the arm of the Lord. For the signers of the document, governments are built by men and can be not only changed but also ultimately remade by men themselves.

The Declaration of Independence, the work of the American bourgeoisie of the Eighteenth Century and the Southern planters had the limitations of that century and those classes. The most striking inconsistency is that while they proclaimed man's equality and rights, about a million of African captives and white indentured servants lived in slavery under them. It has been stated that the leaders of the Revolution, in urgent need of public support, had to include in their pamphlet ideas that have a strong appeal among the people. It is also true that rampant racism manifested in consistent policy and practice against Native Americans and Africans made it possible to justify such awful inconsistency.

The concepts of state and class presented in the document are idealistic. The state is seen as something that stands above classes, as an arbiter mediating in social conflicts and not as an instrument of the classes in power for the defense of their interests. The concept of man is also abstract. The "man" of the Declaration is not the concrete human being, man or woman, white, Black, or Native American, property owner or dispossessed then living in the colonies.

Those are limitations of the Declaration of Independence. Nevertheless, as Aptheker writes,

"It is not the limitations of the Declaration of Independence which define its historic impact. Those limitations of time and place and class, are omissions the actual words of the document, having universality and humanity, remain fresh and inspiring."

The War for Independence

When the war began, an American victory seemed impossible to many people because of Britain's overwhelming superiority. At that time, there were 9,000,000 inhabitants in Great Britain, against less than 3,000,000 in the Thirteen Colonies, of which 600,000 were slaves. Great Britain had the greatest navy of the world and a numerous, well-equipped and trained army which was regarded as invincible; the colonies only had a few thousand ill-trained militiamen to oppose British formidable war machine. Great Britain was a stable, well-knit governmental unit; the colonies were thirteen hurriedly formed, conflicting states; Great Britain was the center of the greatest empire of the world, with colonies to the North and South of the rebels, which could serve as bases for attack, and with a stable currency and unlimited credit; the colonies had none. On top of everything, Great Britain had the greatest merchant fleet and the most powerful industry in the world.

Such superiority led many British officers to treat the rebels with contempt and scorn. They also supposed the rebels to be a minority in the population. Very soon, they had to acknowledge the near universal hostility of the American people toward Great Britain and the outstanding braveness of the continental soldiers. In fact, popular support and morale constituted decisive advantages on the part of the rebels.

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George Washington soon realized that he was commanding a new-type army. His understanding of this fact and of the qualities and needs of that army was very important for the organization and development of the fight. Actually, as the American Army was not a conventional one but a people in arms. Its resources came from the will and the determination of the masses and were, as a result, inexhaustible.

The Colonials developed guerrilla-like tactics learned from the Native Americans that proved very effective. They always marched rapidly, prepared ambushes and attacked by surprise. When the enemy overwhelmed them, they left the field and avoided destruction. Small groups of guerrilla fighters attacked the enemy at night and fought in whatever climatic conditions. Continental militiamen organized armed resistance when the British entered their territory and returned to produce food for the combatants when the enemy left. The British, following conventional tactics, could not stand such kind of warfare.

Naval war was also guerrilla-like. Congress and states commissioned privateers who brought in supplies despite the British blockade and destroyed many enemy ships. They also raided British possessions in America and even several ports of the British islands.

Aptheker points out that the most important advantage of the Americans was morale. The American revolutionists fought for a just cause and because they wanted to fight. They defended their houses, their families, and their land against a foreign enemy who tried to enslave them. These moral factors made of the Continentals outstanding soldiers who endured greater hardships, fought more courageously, and displayed more individual initiative than their adversaries did.

Lafayette, a French revolutionary fighting for the American cause wrote, "No European army would suffer the tenth of what the Americans suffer. It takes citizens to support hunger, nakedness, toil and the total want of pay which constitutes the condition of our soldiers, the hardest and most patient that are to be found in the world."

George Washington wrote in November 1783, "The unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States through almost every possible suffering and discouragement for the space of eight years was little more than a standing miracle."

In the words of a British officer captured at the battle of Saratoga, "The courage and obstinacy with which the Americans fought were the astonishment of every one, and we now become fully convinced they were not that contemptible enemy we had hitherto imagined them..."

The Crown waged a war of deliberate destruction that resulted in increased continental hostility. According to Captain Ferguson of the British Army, "The ravages everywhere wantonly committed, without regard to sex or age, friend or traitor, resulted only in completing the alienation of every thinking mind from the royal cause."

Another factor that provided for the radicalization of the anti-British movement was the use of mercenary troops by the Crown. Because of popular opposition to the war in Great Britain, the British government purchased several thousands of German mercenaries. It did not work well for the British. Among the ranks of the mercenaries, desertions were common. Several thousand went over to the rebels.

During the war, several internationalists from all over the world came to the rebel colonies to help them in their libertarian effort. Among the best known are Lafayette, Duportail, De Kalb, Von Steuben, Kosciusko, Pulaski, and many others. This shows widespread sympathy for the liberating essence of the North American Revolution in Europe and elsewhere.

During the war, the rebels carried out successful diplomatic efforts to gain recognition of their national sovereignty by the European powers that had historically fought Great Britain. Those powers saw in the rebellion of the colonists an opportunity to advance their interests. Their conflict with the British led them to the American side despite their hostility to the ideals of the American Revolution. In 1776, negotiations between an American commission headed by B. Franklin and the French government led to alliance that brought France into the war. It made the conflict in America a European war. France's ally, Spain joined the war in 1779 in the hope to retake Gibraltar and the Floridas. In 1781, Holland entered the war. Great Britain became more isolated when most of the rest of Europe joined in a League of Armed Neutrality.

On "Letter to the American Workers", Lenin wrote,

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When they (the American People) waged their great war of liberation against the British oppressors, they also had against them the French and the Spanish oppressors who owned apart of what is now the United States of America. In their arduous war for freedom, the American people also entered into “agreements” with some oppressors against others for the purpose of weakening the oppressors and strengthening those who were fighting in a revolutionary manner against oppression, for the purpose of serving the interests of the oppressed people.

By 1781, most of British politicians began to realize that an eventual victory over the continentals was impossible. It was becoming clear that the “ragged Continentals” had accomplished what seemed impossible some years before: they had defeated the British armed forces and humbled the most powerful empire on earth. By that time, Great Britain was at war with France, Spain, and Holland, while the formation of the League of Armed Neutrality further isolated her; and the revolutionary army, intact, retained the field.

In May 1781, Pensacola fell to the Spaniards. In October, a combined French American army supported by the French fleet defeated 7,000 British soldiers at the historic battle of Yorktown, in Virginia, virtually ending hostilities in North America. During the following months, the British suffered a series of defeats in other areas of the world. On January 20, 1783, hostilities between the United States and Great Britain officially ceased, and definite articles of peace were concluded and formally signed as the Treaty of Paris, by plenipotentiaries of the two nations on September 3, 1783.

In the Treaty of Paris Great Britain recognized the independence of the United States of America. The new nation obtained all the territory bounded by the Mississippi River on the West, the 31st parallel on the South and the Great Lakes on the North. With this provision, the British betrayed their Native American allies since much of this territory was actually in their possession. Great Britain also acknowledged the United States right to the Newfoundland and retained with the United States the privilege of navigating the Mississippi. The United States agreed to impose “no lawful impediment” to the recovery by British creditors of private debts due to them (despite this agreement, the greatest part of them remained uncollected consented to “recommend” that the states restore loyalist property (Such restoration did not take place).

Results of the Revolution

The most important result of the Revolution was the achievement of national independence and the creation of a new nation, the United States of America. This epoch making event signaled beginning of the long-lasting and arduous struggle of colonial nations for independence that was to transform the world in the following centuries.

The form of state adopted by the revolutionaries was also innovative and had far-reaching repercussions in the continent and the world at large: the republic. In the states and in the federal government this form of government was adopted. Although there were powerful interests that favored monarchical and dictatorial forms of government, the republican was preferred, which is indicative of the democratic nature of the revolution and of the popular pressure that made more autocratic forms of government impossible. The merchants and the planters never intended to extend democracy to the small farmers and workers, but the role these classes played in the fight for national independence made it impossible to ignore their claim for political participation.

In the less favored sections of American society, there was a strong push towards building a more equitable society without the extremes of poverty and wealth typical of the rest of the world. Such a transformation was not possible. The consolidation of private property over the means of production in the hands of the few was by then in process of growth. Nevertheless, the Revolution delivered attacks against anything inhibiting capitalist forms of property with the exception of slavery in the South.

The slaves constituted an important part of the new nation’s labor force. Antislavery feelings were widespread during the revolutionary struggle and were reinforced by the democratic content of the effort. In 1774, Abigail Adams wrote to her husband “it always appeared a most iniquitous scheme to me to fight ourselves for what we are daily robbing and plundering from those who have as good a right to freedom as we have”. Opposition to slavery was also widespread among other revolutionary leaders. The antislavery forces made important advances during this period. Abolitionist societies were founded and several states, especially in the North, passed laws forbidding the importation of slaves. When the revolution ended, slavery was abolished in all the states of the North and the new territories to the North West. Nevertheless, slavery was preserved intact in the South, where most of the slaves lived and sanctioned by the Constitution of 1787.

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Capitalism requires free wageworkers. Nevertheless, the predominant forms of capitalism then existing in America were mercantile or agricultural, not industrial. Slavery complemented such economic forms for merchants fed on slave traffic and on the commercialization of the products of slave labor. The opening of a vast continent to the west minimized the contradictions between farmers and planters, each group living in a geographically distant section of the continent. Slavery, concentrated in the South, isolated the horrors to the institution far from the eyes of Northerners and made the power of the planters particularly strong. Besides, racism was very powerful all over America, North as well as South. The plunder of the Native Americans in the Northwest Territories, the genocidal policies carried there against the tribes, weakened criticism to the “peculiar institution” of the South on moral grounds.

Indentured servitude survived the Revolution for about a generation. The industrialization of the North, the availability of free lands to the west and the growth of the slave system in the South led to its decline and disappearance. The Revolution also helped to end the system of indentured servitude by delivering attacks upon the theory and practice of imprisonment for debt, the legal base upon which indentured servitude rested.

Feudal forms of life were eradicated by the Revolution. Feudal laws on land, entail and primogeniture were abolished. Quit rents, which were payments tenants had to make to proprietors, were also abolished. In addition, an agrarian revolution made land more available to the poor. The rights of proprietors were abolished, and the lands of the Tories were confiscated, divided up, sold to individual families or given to soldiers as payments. The vast land mass from the Appalachians to the Mississippi River, up to then monopolized by Great Britain, was now opened to colonization. An increasingly generous land-granting system was provided which encouraged a constant westward movement of people to the West and the rapid economic development of the continent from coast to coast. The availability of cheap, in many cases free land westward had an enormous significance in US history.

The Revolution freed industry and trade from the fetters imposed upon them by Great Britain in the interest of the merchant capitalists, landowners, and manufacturers of the Mother Country. Colonial economic regulations were largely destroyed by the Revolution and the home capitalists attained the control of the national market. The relatively free development of trade and industry that followed, also involved the creation of the modern working class.

The war was a great stimulus for the development of manufacture. Manufacturing made important progress during the war years. The closing of British market and the release from British mercantile restrictions stimulated textile production and the demand for war materials increased the number of factories, foundries and mines. Independence automatically removed British mercantile regulations and opened new outlets to American production in southern Europe, the West Indies, South America, and Asia. Internal trade between mutually dependent regions also increased.

There were important gains regarding religious freedom. The Constitution of 1787 brought about the formal separation of Church and State thus, Article I of the Bill of Rights stated, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The rights of religious groups traditionally persecuted, as was the case of Catholics and Jews were granted.

During the colonial period, women were subjected to especially crude exploitation because of their sex. Foster writes,

...Women were everywhere the oppressed of the oppressed. They suffered not only the exploitation common to other toilers, but a special oppression based on sex... They were worse off even than the men workers, were more completely denied every political right, and were by law treated as minors. They were always placed in a lower economic category than the men. Besides all this, as women, they were looked upon as beings inferior in intelligence and strength to men and despised accordingly. They were robbed of even the little education that was to be had... the slave women were the personal property of the master, not only to be worked at will; but also to cater to their sexual appetites.

Women were active participants of the revolutionary movement. They were present in all of important actions, notably in the boycotts to the British trade. Apteker points out that, women were “towers

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of strength in terms of morale and supply throughout the years off fighting” Some women raised the question of women’s rights. Thus, Abigail Adams complained to her husband that while they were rebelling against the King’s tyranny, they ignored the tyranny exercised by husbands toward their wives.

The Revolution was unable to make any fundamental alteration to the status of women. Nevertheless, some achievements were made: the old established custom that parents arranged the marriage of their sons and daughters went into decline; it became easier to obtain a divorce; property and inheritance rights of women were enhanced; and some progress was made in the struggle for a better education for women. It is significant to note that today, more than two hundred years later, US women have not yet been recognized an equal status to men by the American Constitution.

The Constitution of 1787

Thirteen Colonies had grown as separated entities, like small independent nations. National unity was accomplished with great difficulty under the life and death pressures of the war for independence. Although the colonies realized the need for coordinated action against Great Britain, sectional differences constituted a serious handicap for the revolutionary army throughout the war. Congress was never strong enough to provide Washington with a sufficiently solid federal army for it could not force the states to fill their quotas.

The first Constitution of the United States was the Articles of Confederation. It provided for a loose association, since at the time the states were trying to get rid of a strong oppressive government and opposed tyranny. According to the Articles of Confederation, each state retained virtual governmental independence and the central government could do little to meddle in interstate contradictions.

The weakness of the Confederation was soon revealed and the need of a strong central government arose. It soon became clear that the Confederation was threatened by disintegration, and, what was more serious in the eyes of the wealthy, property was not safe. Among the many existing problems resulting from a weak state were the following: The states quarreled over boundary lines and set up protective tariffs that hindered inter-state trade. Some states began separate negotiations with foreign countries. Besides, growing home manufactures required protective tariffs against the competition of European goods. Capitalist development required a stable uniform currency. People had to use coins from different nations and with states and national paper bills that quickly depreciated. Moneylenders who had advanced money to Congress for the conduct of the war wanted their bonds paid. People moving to the West needed an army to remove the Native Americans from their lands. The Southern planters also needed an army ready at hand to deal with slave uprisings.

The 1785-1786 depression produced intense hardships. In the elections of 1786, radical popular sectors won in several states and began to pass measures in favor of the debtor groups. In the states where the popular groups failed armed disturbances broke out. In the summer of 1786, after several courthouses in western Massachusetts had been attacked, Captain Daniel Shays, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, led some thousands of peasants in an agrarian revolt. Shay’s Rebellion was put down with force of arms but it frightened greatly all men of property. It seemed to presage a revolutionary movement toward the left. General Knox wrote to Washington that New England had thousands of men whose creed was “That the property of the United States had been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of all and therefore ought to be the common property of all.” Washington wrote, “There are combustibles in every state which a spark might set afire in.” This was the general view among the propertied and the logical inference was that a stronger national government was needed to suppress popular discontent.

The Constitutional Convention that drafted the present Constitution of the United States held its meetings in Philadelphia from May 25 to 17, 1787. The delegates to the Convention had been chosen by the state legislatures during the previous months and the Continental Congress had called the Convention “for the sole and express purpose of revising the articles of the Confederation” Ignoring that mandate, the delegates immediately began to work on a new plan of union for the thirteen states.

Most of the delegates were conservative men of property and tended to be conservative in outlook. They were moneylenders, merchants, manufacturers, bondholders, speculators, or slaveholders. The farmers,

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the mechanics, and the debtor groups were virtually without representation. The radicals Thomas Jefferson, John and Sam Adams, and Thomas Paine were not among the delegates.

Although the Constitutional Convention devoted time debating differences in points of view, it is important to realize that all of the delegates were agreed on two vital questions: the need of a strong central government as a bulwark of property; and the need to limit democracy as far as possible. Accordingly, their sessions were kept secret to protect themselves from popular pressure. The merchants and planters, in full control of the Constitutional Convention, needed a government that would consolidate all the victories of the Revolution in their own class interests.

The term constitution is generally understood (in US political language) as "... the set of rules, laws, regulations and customs which together provide the practical norms or standards regulating the work of government". Although the Constitution of 1787 is a basic document, it is only a portion of the group of regulations and customs that constitute the so-called "live constitution" of the United States and that includes as well the Federal bureaucracy, the lobbying groups and the mass media.

The Constitution of the United States is considered a conservative document. Nevertheless, the document is the legacy of a national liberation revolution with profound democratic currents and bears that imprint. The Founding Fathers were conscious of the fact that democracy should be reduced as much as possible. But they themselves were the leaders of that revolution. Ultimately, the delegates were under great popular pressure from the people waiting outside the Convention doors to approve or disapprove of their workings. The farmers, mechanics and people in general who would have to ratify the Constitution were the same who, shortly before, had defeated and humiliated Great Britain, the greatest power on earth, the superpower of the time. Those people were, as the delegates new very well, armed and imbued with radical, revolutionary ideals of equality and rights of political participation. Therefore, their task was a difficult one.

Following contemporary political theories, governmental powers were divided into three branches. Three separate agencies were created to perform each of these powers: the Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court. The delegates to the Constitutional Convention also devised a system of "checks and balances" to supplement the theory of separate powers". According to this system of balances, one house of Congress was intended to act as a check on the other; congress was to be a check to the other "powers" and vice versa. For example, it was stated that before bills become laws they must be passed by the House and the Senate, they must have the president's signature. Treaties are made by the executive but must be ratified by the Senate.

This mechanism was devised as a protection against too great a concentration of power in one government body. The Founding Fathers were afraid a tyrant or the "populace" would ever be able to gain control over that machine or, at least, over part of it. Hence, the division of powers and the many checks and balances devised.

They followed the same principle in devising the electoral system. Only the House of Representatives, one-half of those three parts, would be elected directly by the voters. All other parts would be elected indirectly and for different periods. So, the Senate was to be elected by the state legislators for six years. Only one third of the Senators are renewed every two years the other two-thirds remaining in office to provide continuity of policies. The President is elected for a four-year term by electors, who have been chosen by the state legislatures, who in their turn have been elected by the voters. The Supreme Court is appointed for life tenure by the President, who has been elected as described above and each appointment is ratified by a two-third majority of the Senate. The Supreme Court exercises the function of Constitutional review, with power to veto any legislation in case an appeal takes the case to their jurisdiction.

In the contingency that some radical group might try to make substantial changes to their nation by electoral means, and their representatives would gain majority in any given election, there would remain two thirds of the Senate and the Supreme Court to see that unsafe laws are not passed.

During the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention, the contradictions between the rising capitalist interests and the slave-owning interests were settled by a compromise among "gentlemen". To satisfy the planters the Constitution prohibited any taxes on exports (Southern economy depended almost entirely on the export of their staples), and granted that for at least 20 years there would be no ban on the importation of slaves. It also required the Free states to return any fugitive slave who sought refuge there.

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Finally, because of the “three fifths” compromise, five Blacks were to be counted as equivalent to three whites for both, direct taxes and representation.

Foster points out that the Constitution definitely recognized slavery, although the ugly word “slave” was avoided very carefully. This recognition is implied in three constitutional articles. For example, Article I, Section 2, states that representatives and direct taxes be determined by adding to the free persons and the indentured servants “...three fifths of all other persons”. The “all other persons” were the slaves for whom the planters obtained three-fifths representation in the House.

The new government was instructed with wide economic and, political powers: Congress was granted the power to levy and collect taxes and tariffs, to coin and borrow money, and to pay all debts contracted by the United States before the adoption of the Constitution. It was entrusted with power to raise and maintain an army and a navy, to declare war, and to suppress insurrections. Congress was also entitled with the right to regulate interstate and foreign commerce. State legislatures were deprived of all the rights mentioned above, and were forbidden to make any laws giving people more time to pay debts or allowing debts to be paid in goods or cattle.

The Constitution of the United States is made up of an introductory statement, seven articles, and several amendments. The first ten amendments, which were adopted in 1791 under popular pressure, are known as The Bill of Rights. When the Constitution was presented to the state legislatures for ratification, it was opposed by frontiersmen, small farmers, and debtors who considered it antidemocratic. So that the Constitution would be ratified, its supporters granted that the first government would adopt a Bill of Rights (like similar documents that had been adopted by some state legislatures during the Revolution) which would guarantee certain freedoms and individual rights to the people.

The Bill of Rights introduced some basic rights as freedom of the press, freedom of worship, trial by jury, right of petition and freedom from arbitrary search and arrest. The inclusion of those rights in the Constitution is important for democratic struggles in the United States. Some of these amendments especially the Fifth Amendment continue to be of significance in the fight of the North American people for civil rights. The fifth provides that no one “...shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law...” and no person “...be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself”.

The United States is a bourgeois republic where political power belongs to monopoly capitalists. All branches of government are filled up with people who stand, in the main, for the interests of big business: bankers, industrialists, and their representatives. The interests of workers and poor farmers are poorly represented.

In form, the US government is based on the Constitution of 1787 with few modifications. It is divided into three branches: legislative (the US Congress), executive (the president and his administration) and judicial (the US Supreme Court).

The Congress of the United States is composed of two Houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate represents the states and the House represents the population according to its distribution among the states. Two senators are elected from each state. Each state is guaranteed at least one representative in the House, the remainder being apportioned among the states according to population.

Congress leading function is to legislate. It also exercises some control over foreign policy though its power over the budget, although this is largely an executive responsibility. One of its significant functions is to determine taxation.

The US President is both head of state and government, as well as the commander in chief of the Army. The President is assisted by Secretaries who are at the head of executive departments. The most important of the departments are those of state and defense. In spite of the division of powers, the decisive role in governments belongs to the President and his Executive Office.

The Supreme Court is formed by a Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices. It is the supreme court of appeal for criminal cases. In time, it has developed functions of constitutional review with the right to decide if a bill of the legislature or an executive order of the presidency is constitutional or not. It is considered that the Constitution needs interpretation and this has become one of the fundamental functions of the Supreme Court.

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During the political history of the United States, US bourgeoisie developed a two-party electoral system. Two political parties, Republicans and Democrats, alternate in power for periods of four years. There is little if any difference between the composition and the political platforms of these two political groups, since both represent the interests of the big monopoly capitalists of the nation. Many people see no difference between Republicans and Democrats and abstain from voting.

Besides the Constitutional branches and the political parties, mass media, Television in the main, by its impact on public opinion, play an important role in policymaking. Lobbying groups, who represent powerful sectors of society, also influence on politicians, their attitudes and behavior. Finally, the enormous state bureaucracy, massively heavy and slow to react because of its numbers, plays a fundamental role in the implementation of policies.

3. Industrial Revolution in USA (1800- 1850)

3.1 The Industrial Revolution in the first half of the XIX century.

United States



Slater's Mill

The United States originally used horse-powered machinery to power its earliest factories, but eventually switched to water power, with the consequence that industrialization was essentially limited to New England and the rest of the Northeastern United States, where fast-moving rivers were located. Horse-drawn production proved to be economically challenging and a more difficult alternative to the newer water-powered production lines. However, the raw materials (cotton) came from the Southern United States. It was not until after the Civil War in the 1860s that steam-powered manufacturing overtook water-powered manufacturing, allowing the industry to fully spread across the nation.

Samuel Slater (1768–1835) is popularly known as the founder of the American cotton industry. As a boy apprentice in Derbyshire, England, he learned of the new techniques in the textile industry and defied laws against the emigration of skilled workers by leaving for New York in 1789, hoping to make money with his knowledge. Slater, among the Cabot Brothers and investors, started the Beverly Cotton Manufactory in Beverly, Massachusetts. This was the first cotton mill in America. This cotton mill was designed to utilize horse-powered production. The mill operators quickly learned that the economic stability of their horse-drawn platform was unstable, and had fiscal issues for years after it was built. Despite the losses, the Manufactory served as a playground of innovation, both in turning a large amount of cotton, but also developing the water-powered milling structure used in Slater's second mill, Slater's Mill at Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1793. He went on to own thirteen textile mills. Daniel Day established a wool carding mill in the Blackstone Valley at Uxbridge, Massachusetts in 1810, the third woollen mill established in the U.S. (The first was in Hartford, Connecticut, and the second at Watertown, Massachusetts.) The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor retraces the history of "America's Hardest-Working River", the Blackstone. The Blackstone River and its tributaries, which cover more than 45 miles (72 km) from Worcester to Providence, was the birthplace of America's Industrial Revolution. At its peak over 1100 mills operated in this valley, including Slater's mill, and with it the earliest beginnings of America's Industrial and Technological Development.

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While on a trip to England in 1810, Newburyport merchant Francis Cabot Lowell was allowed to tour the British textile factories, but not take notes. Realizing the War of 1812 had ruined his import business but that a market for domestic finished cloth was emerging in America, he memorized the design of textile machines and on his return to the United States, he set up the Boston Manufacturing Company. Lowell and his partners built America's second cotton-to-cloth textile mill at Waltham, Massachusetts, second to the Beverly Cotton Manufactory. After his death in 1817, his associates built America's first planned factory town, which they named after him. This enterprise was capitalized in a public stock offering, one of the first uses of it in the United States. Lowell, Massachusetts, utilizing 5.6 miles (9.0 km) of canals and ten thousand horsepower delivered by the Merrimack River, is considered by some to be a major contributor to the success of the American Industrial Revolution. The short-lived utopia-like Lowell System was formed, as a direct response to the poor working conditions in Britain. However, by 1850, especially following the Irish Potato Famine, the system had been replaced by poor immigrant labour.

The industrialization of the watch industry started 1854 also in Waltham, Massachusetts, at the Waltham Watch Company, with the development of machine tools, tools, gauges and assembling methods adapted to the micro precision required for watches.

3.2 Territorial expansion (1800- 1850).

Territorial Expansion

With the Treaty of Paris, the United States extended its sovereignty over a vast area from the thirty-first parallel on the south to the Great Lakes in the north, and from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi River. This did not long satisfy the need for land of the rapidly developing new nation and the westward advance begun with the first settlement in 1607 continued. During the next three generations, the boundaries of the nation were pushed west until they reached the Pacific Ocean.

During the post-war period, westward migration became a multitudinous endeavor. Southern slave owners, who sought to extend the slave plantation system; Northern land speculators, who wanted to obtain huge tracks of land to profit from subsequent retailing; and the vast poor masses of the population, who tried to get a piece of land in the West to settle a farm and gain a living. The combination of all these forces resulted in an irresistible wave of colonists pressing westward and relentlessly sweeping aside the Native Americans and the rival nations.

In the years that preceded the Revolutionary War, hunters had crossed the Appalachians around the region of Western Virginia and North Carolina into the future states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Seeking the valuable buffalo, bear, and deerskins, these hunters, in groups or single, made long raids, explored the wilderness, and prepared the way for the trader who followed them. The trader exchanged rum and trinkets for the furs of the Native Americans. After the hunter and the trader came the squatter, who transported his family with him, built a rude cabin and cleared a corn path in the forest.

In 1775 Daniel Boone, an agent of a land speculator of North Carolina, blazed a trail into Tennessee and Kentucky. This famous Wilderness Road provided the route by which thousands of pioneers moved west during and after the revolutionary period. Another route was traced by boat on the waters of the Ohio River into present Ohio.

Migration into the Northwestern Territory was generally carried out by companies organized for protection. First came the livestock, driven by the older boys, then horses or wagons, laden with the goods of the migrant families and the women and children. All the men, carrying loaded guns, spread out on the front, flanks, and rear of the caravan as scouts and guards. At night, the company formed a camp, built fires all around and placed sentinels for protection.

Once a proper place was chosen for the settlement, the land was apportioned among the migrating families. The squatter lived as his colonial prototype had lived. Often his family dwelt in a cave or a rude lean-to while the farmer and his neighbors built a rough log cabin. Fields were still cleared by cutting down or girdling the larger trees and by burning the smaller ones.

The squatter's farm was hard to keep. Land policy was intended to favor the land speculators and the planters, and it often happened that the squatter lost the land he had improved. His cleared lands were surveyed and put up for sale at auction. Unable to pay even the minimum price, the squatter saw his lands go

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to the hands of some land speculator or planter. The squatters organized for resistance in a struggle, which eventually led to the amendment of the Federal law in successive reductions of the minimum price until free homesteads were gained in 1862.

The conquest and colonization of the West were colossal tasks carried out by millions of people. This mass move was so great, L. Huberman points out, that while there were 5,000 people west of the Appalachians in 1770 there were more than 8,000,000 people there in 1840.

The leading expansionists raised the slogan of "Manifest Destiny" to justify expansion. White Americans, they demanded, were predestined to own all of the North American continent and much of South America. The ideologists of expansionism disregarded the rights of the Native Americans and of the rival nations in their plans of continental dominion.

The Native Americans resisted the invaders in a number of desperate wars, but weakened by disunion and overpowered by the numerical and technical superiority of the whites, they were always doomed to annihilation or removal. In these wars, the whites far exceeded the "savages" in brutality. Non-combatant people were massacred, prisoners were tortured, scalped, mutilated, burned alive, and treaties were violated. It has been said that it was "...one of the most disgraceful pages in the history of the United States"

The "Purchase" of Louisiana

The territory of Louisiana had been held by Spain from 1793 to 1800, when the Spanish Crown was forced by a secret treaty (San Idelfonso Treaty) to yield this region to France. The acquisition of Louisiana by powerful France was a direct threat to the expansionist plans of the US government. While this region was in the hands of the weak and declining Spain westward expansion did not seem to be seriously hindered but the passing of this vast region to the possession of the powerful Napoleonic Empire was quite a different thing.

When Thomas Jefferson, then president, learned of this deal, he let Napoleon know that in the event of a war between Great Britain and France the United States would join arms with the British. In the President's opinion, "There is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market." In March 1803, Jefferson sent James Monroe to France with instructions to try to buy the territory around the port of New Orleans.

Napoleon planned to build a great French Empire in Louisiana and develop the region into a source of supply for the French West Indies. To fulfill this plan the French colony of Haiti was essential as a naval base and a food-producing center. Nevertheless, Napoleon's project was frustrated by the triumphant Haitian Revolution (1791-1803) led by Toussaint L'Ouverture. Napoleon devised a campaign to conquer Haiti, restore slavery there, and proceed with the colonization of Louisiana. In 1801, General Leclerc was sent to Haiti with 29,000 veteran soldiers to subdue the island. Toussaint was betrayed by Leclerc and sent to a French prison where he died soon afterward, but his indomitable followers continued the struggle until the French army was almost wholly destroyed.

Having Napoleon's campaign against Toussaint ended in defeat, the French dreams of an American Empire dwindled away. Besides, France was increasingly involved in war in Europe. US settlers were already moving into Louisiana, and the US government showed its determination to join Great Britain against France. Napoleon realized that it was a case of selling the region or losing it by conquest. To make the best of a bad situation, he resolved to sell. By the time Monroe arrived in France, the whole Louisiana Territory had been proposed to the US minister in Paris, Robert Livingston. On April 1803, after brief talks, the deal was closed.

The price paid was \$15,000,000, that is, about four cents per acre. Louisiana was a huge domain of about one million square miles containing some of the best land of the world and immense reserves of natural resources. It embraces the present day states of Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, the Dakotas, Montana, Idaho, part of Oregon and Louisiana. The amount paid for this enormous territory, which almost doubled the size of the United States at the time, and the conditions under which the "purchase" was made, make the case a seizure at gunpoint rather than a purchase.

The acquisition of Louisiana aroused bitter political conflicts within the Union. Southern planters cheerfully welcomed the opening of a vast territory to the expansion of slavery. The land speculators and the small farmers also favored the "purchase". But New England merchants and manufacturers, afraid of the strengthening of the agricultural interests of the nation, strongly rejected the transaction and even plotted to

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secede from the Union on the ground that the Constitution did not delegate powers to purchase new territories.

On December 20, 1803, the United States formally took possession of Louisiana. The rights of the Native Americans over these lands were disregarded. The next year, two territories were carved out of the region and administration was organized according to the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

The Revolutionary War had devastating effects for Iroquois and Algonquians, the great eastern peoples. Those who fought together with the British were abandoned at the Paris Peace Treaty by their allies. In 1784, the greatly weakened tribes were forced to sign a "treaty" by means of which they lost the lands comprised at present by Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. The chief Little Turtle was able to organize resistance and for some time the ever-increasing flood of colonists was fought back, but in the end, Little Turtle's forces were crushed by Federal soldiers and the whole region was opened to colonization.

By the early years of the Nineteenth Century the Algonquian Chief Tecumseh and his brother, "the Prophet" began to work for the organization of a united front to resist conquest. They preached the union of all the Native Americans from Canada to Florida and the organization of a democratic Native American republic. Several tribes had been organized on this basis when General W. H. Harrison, later a US President, attacked and massacred them at Tippecanoe, Indiana, in 1811. Chief Tecumseh, who was not in the village when the attack took place, mobilized the survivors and swore them to eternal war. After a gallant struggle against the invaders, Tecumseh was killed in 1812. The "civilized" whites made souvenir razor strops of his skin.

After 1812, the US government drove all the tribes living west of the Appalachians out of their lands and across the Mississippi. For more than three decades, the desperate resistance of the Native Americans led local wars in which tens of thousands perished. The once powerful Cherokee and Creek tribes who possessed about 26,000,000 acres in Georgia were imposed a "treaty" by means of which they ceded their rights over those lands. In spite of their opposition, in 1838, the two tribes were surrounded by US troops and driven to the West where they were promised to remain undisturbed forever, a promise that was not kept. From the 14,000 people who began the long journey 4,000 died in what they called the "trail of tears".

In 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. During the following years, most of the remaining tribes were forced to leave their home countries and to take the sad trail to the West. Before the Civil War, the vast territory stretching between the Appalachians and the Mississippi had already been cleared of Native Americans and cut up into twelve states.

Florida

The peninsula of Florida had been discovered by the Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon in 1513 and had been colonized by Spain. Soon after the "purchase" of Louisiana, the US government began to claim Florida on the ground that the boundaries of Louisiana were uncertain, and that the region was included in the purchase. In spite of strong diplomatic pressure from the US government, the Spanish Crown refused to yield Florida and President Jefferson ended his second term in 1808, leaving the conflict unsettled. Jefferson, nevertheless, enunciated a program of action toward this problem that was to take shape into a definite foreign policy. According to this, the United States had claims over Florida but the US government should wait until Spain entered into a state of war, and then, "if we push them (the demands) strongly with one hand holding out a price in the other, we shall certainly obtain the Floridas, and all in good time".

The "good time" came by 1810 when the war for independence of the Spanish possessions in America began. With most of the Spanish colonies in the mainland in revolt and the Spanish people engaged in a life and death war against French occupation, the Floridas stood defenseless. In July 1810, the US settlers living in West Feliciana formed a convention, attacked and seized Baton Rouge, the unprotected capital of the province, set up the "free and independent" state of West Florida, and asked for annexation to the United States. In October 1810, President Madison ordered the military occupation of the region, an arbitrary aggression against a peaceful neighboring country.

On March 16 1812, a group of settlers, armed and encouraged by the US government, crossed the Georgian border and attacked the Spanish town of Fernandina, in East Florida. They were backed by the US Navy. After the fall of Fernandina, American troops occupied the region and initiated a war against the resisting Spaniards and Seminoles. Spain, engaged in war in Europe and in her American colonies, could do

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nothing against these aggressions, but British diplomatic pressure and the opposition of the Northern delegates in Congress forced President Madison to withdraw his soldiers.

Filibustering expeditions against East Florida continued sporadically until 1817 when the US General Andrew Jackson, under the pretext to persecute Seminoles, occupied most of the province and the largest towns. The Spanish government, engaged in the preparation of an expedition to conquer South America, yielded to the diplomatic and military pressure of the United States to gain American support—or at least neutrality—in the colonial war. On February 22, 1819, a treaty was signed. The United States received the whole territory—58,666 square miles—and paid \$5,000,000 to settle the claims of Spanish landowners. Another shotgun “purchase” had been made.

The removal of the Native Americans who inhabited Florida became a hard task. The tribes had joined with runaway slaves from the Southern states, forming the Seminole people, and organized resistance in the Everglades, the almost impenetrable swamps of southern Florida. General Jackson carried out several military expeditions against the Seminoles in 1817 and in 1818, but he only met defeats. In 1832, Andrew Jackson, then the President of the Union, provoked the second Seminole war, which lasted seven years. The best troops and generals of the US Army were, repeatedly defeated by the Seminoles under the leadership of Chief Osceola. This was the most bitterly fought Native American war in US History.

Incapable to annihilate or remove the Seminole people, the US government invited Osceola to a peace conference. There, the Seminole chief was knocked out and thrown into a dungeon where he died soon after. The Seminoles, nevertheless, continued their struggle. Many were able to resist removal and remained in their lands.

Cuba. The Adams Doctrine

As early as 1805, President Thomas Jefferson had claimed that the United States needed Cuba for the protection of Louisiana, recently acquired, and Florida, then in dispute. He asserted that in an eventual war with Spain the United States would invade both Florida and Cuba. In 1809, General Wilkinson, an agent of the US government, was sent to Havana to analyze the possibilities of a rebellion of the Cubans with some rich Cuban planters who favored annexation to the United States. The move was known and it aroused protests from Napoleon and from the British government who opposed US expansion.

A similar scheme was developed in 1822. In that year, the US cabinet secretly considered the proposals made by a certain “Mr. Sanchez”, an agent of a conspiratorial group in Havana who wanted Cuba annexed to the United States. The plan might have been tried but home opposition to the incorporation of Cuba on an equal footing to the other states (Cuba was preferred as a possession) and British quick action made it impossible. Great Britain was then the greatest maritime power and the leading nation in the industrial revolution. British trade with the countries of South America had been successfully developing for the last decades and her appetite for conquest had grown accordingly. The British navy was sent to the Antilles “to protect British trade from piratical attacks”. British officials were instructed to disembark in Cuban coasts, if necessary, while executing their task.

As the attempts to obtain Cuba by force had failed, the United States adopted a new strategy. The opportunistic policy of expectation first designed by Jefferson was given a final shape by John Q. Adams, Monroe’s Secretary of State (1816-1824) and later President (1824-1828). Adams pointed out the growing links existing between the United States and Cuba. Stated that the annexation of Cuba to the United States “...will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself”. Taking into account that there were too formidable obstacles for annexation then, he considered that Cuba should be preserved in the weak hands of Spain for the time being until appropriate conditions were created. Once the connections existing between Cuba and Spain were severed, the island would inevitably “gravitate” toward the United States, as a ripe fruit falls to the ground. Faithful to that policy, the United States strongly opposed any attempt to liberate Cuba from Spain (in the Panama Congress and during the long and arduous Cuban wars for liberation). At the same time, the United States continued encouraging the annexationist movement in Cuba and made Spain fresh proposals for a negotiated “purchase”.

The Monroe Doctrine

With the Monroe Doctrine, the expansionist policy that the US government had been carrying out since the foundation of the Union took a definite and coherent shape. Such policy was the immediate result of

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the clash of interests of American and European (chiefly British) ruling circles, both seeking to take hold of the nascent Latin American republics.

By the 1820's the independence of the Latin American republics had become an irreversible reality. To counterattack the anti-colonial and pro-democratic movement projected by the worldwide bourgeois revolution, a reactionary Holy Alliance was formed by France, Russia, Prussia and Austria. This counterrevolutionary combination, assuming the role of world gendarme, undertook the task of defeating the Latin American Revolution and reversing the decolonization process.

In October 1823, George Canning, the British Prime Minister, proposed Richard Rush, the US Minister in London, a joint Anglo-American declaration protesting the plans of the Holy Alliance to return Latin America to the domination of Spain or to conquer it for the powers of the Alliance. The joint declaration should state that both Great Britain and the United States would eventually recognize the newly born Latin American republics, denounce any cession of former Spanish territories to another power, and establish a compromise not to encourage rebellion in the existing Spanish colonies for the benefit of either Great Britain or the United States.

Canning's proposition was sent to Washington for debate in the Cabinet. Although there were varied opinions among Cabinet members, John Q. Adams' arguments prevailed. The Secretary of State considered that it was not the Holy Alliance but the United States what threatened British interests in America. He also considered that Canning was trying to intimidate the United States with the threat of the Holy Alliance's planned expedition of conquest so as to force the US government into a pledge that would prevent future territorial acquisitions by the United States in the continent —particularly Cuba and Texas.

Accordingly, the British proposal was rejected and, at the same time, a statement that would define the position of the US government toward the problem was carefully prepared. The aims of the declaration (chiefly the work of Adams) were to present the United States as the champion of liberty in the Americas, the defender of the Latin American republics —whom the US government had always refused to help in their wars for liberation. Simultaneously, the American declaration would open free way to US expansion and continental hegemony by isolating America from Europe.

On December 2, 1823, President Monroe, in his annual address to Congress, issued the declaration that has come down in history as "his doctrine". The prominent passages of this statement read,

... the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers (...) We owe it to candor and the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.

The United States claimed for itself the role of protector of the Americas (without any previous consultation with the Latin American countries) against European colonial expansion. The doctrine received a universally favorable reception in Latin America until its actual meaning was made evident. The Monroe Doctrine provided for an appropriate diplomatic background for the US policy of keeping the prey in the weakest hands up to the right moment, and for the US economic, political, and territorial expansion. Soon were the countries of Latin America to learn that US policy of "America for Americans" actually meant America for the USA.

During the following decades, there were numerous European acts of intervention in the internal affairs of the Latin American republics which motivated appeals for help from these countries to the United States: Colombia in 1824; Venezuela, Peru, and Ecuador in 1846; Nicaragua in 1848; Honduras, and El Salvador in 1849; etc. These appeals for assistance were either evaded or ignored by the US government.

In 1833, the British government seized the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) from Argentina, which found no opposition from the US government. In the same way, the resistance offered by the Central American countries to the British colonization of Honduras, found no support from the US government. In 1837, the port of Cartagena was blockaded by the British fleet; in 1838, Vera Cruz was blockaded by the French; in 1861, Spain took over the Dominican Republic. There was no opposition from the US government. In 1864, Mexico was invaded by France, in a gross violation of Latin American sovereignty, and a French puppet, the

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Austrian Archduke Maximilian, was placed on the throne. The United States did nothing effective in response. American refusal to act in defense of Latin American sovereignty seemed to be a violation of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine; it was not so. The US ruling classes, engaged in the colonization of “their” western lands and in the aggressive expansion of their country at the expense of the very republics they boasted to defend, were neither able nor willing to act in defense of the Latin American republics. The doctrine was but a sham to disguise aggressions and to legitimate expansion.

Pressed by the greed for land, the ideologists of the Manifest Destiny among US ruling classes developed and presented to the government several unreasonable schemes of territorial conquest that were seriously considered and even attempted sometimes. These plans were generally promoted and supported by the Southern planters that always sought the expansion of their slave system into new territories. They contemplated, for example, the purchase of Cuba, the seizure of Panama, the annexation of Yucatan, the assimilation of the Dominican Republic, and the conquest of Brazil. The best known of those unsuccessful expansionist maneuvers, were the filibustering raids carried out by William Walker, a Tennessee slaveholder, against the countries of Central America. In 1855, this adventurer, with funds provided by some rich capitalists and Southern planters, and counting on the support of his government, invaded Nicaragua with a party of mercenaries. He made himself “President” of that country, declared English its official language, legalized slavery, and received the recognition of the US government before he was driven out by a combination of Central American armies. After two futile attempts to conquer Nicaragua and Honduras in the following years, he was captured and shot in 1860.

During the first half of the Nineteenth Century, the Northern industrialists also developed their own expansionist drive towards the Northwest and the North. They attempted to seize Canada during the Anglo-American War of 1812. This war was forced upon the US people by the British, who had not yet become reconciled to the loss of their colonies and had persistently tried to prevent the commercial and industrial development of the United States. Great Britain intended to restore her colonial regime upon that country. For the US people this war was waged for the preservation of their freedom and a continuation of their War of Independence. Taking advantage of the conflict the US expansionists aimed at conquering Canada, which became one of the main battlefields of the war. Because of the unwillingness of the Canadian people to be annexed to the United States and because of military blunders, the endeavor was unsuccessful and Canada remained a British colony.

The Mexican Affair

Texas

Since the early Nineteenth Century, the Northern part of present day Mexico, then under the rule of the Spanish Crown, suffered intermittent attacks coming from the South of the United States. These raids, carried out by gangs of adventurers were organized by Southern slave-owners under the connivance of the US government. These incursions were successfully fought back by the Spanish authorities.

Peaceful colonization achieved better results. In 1820, the Spanish government of Mexico authorized Moses Austin to settle a colony in Texas. Moses died that year but his son, Stephen, substituted him and soon a flood of immigrants poured in. The settlers, mainly slave-owners and adventurers of all kind, openly violated the conditions imposed by the Spanish government to convert themselves to the Catholic religion, to have no slaves, and to accept the sovereignty of Spain. In the meantime, Mexico won independence and the New Mexican authorities naively consented to continuing immigration. The Mexicans believed that this would foster friendly relations with the neighboring republic, a policy they soon had to regret. By 1830, there were 20,000 US settlers in Texas.

The US government had been claiming the Texas area since the Louisiana Purchase. In 1825, President John Q. Adams offered Mexico \$1,500,000, for the region. This move forewarned the Mexican government of a US plot to seize the region. Mexico refused to sell and began to try to limit immigration and to control the increasingly mutinous Texans (US settlers). But Mexican measures were of no avail; thousands of settlers crossed the unprotected frontier “lugging guns rather than ploughshares”.

The Mexican law of 1829, which abolished slavery, was militantly disobeyed by the Texans, as the American settlers were called, and preparations were begun to tear Texas away from Mexico. President Andrew Jackson, elected in 1829, took an active hand in the arrangement of a Texan “rebellion” —the same scheme utilized in Florida. In 1832, Sam Houston arrived in Texas with instructions from President Jackson

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to organize a revolt of the Texans. Houston, a retired officer of the US Army and close friend to the President, did his job efficiently and, in April 1832, a convention of Texan representatives issued a new constitution that declared Texas “independent”. Mexico, devastated by civil war could do little to resist the plunder.

Meanwhile, the Texans were strengthened by thousands of volunteers attracted by the promise of free lands. A short and bloody war started in 1835. On April 21, 1836, Houston surprised and defeated President Santa Ana’s army at San Jacinto Creek ending the conflict. The captured Mexican President signed a treaty —promptly repudiated by the Mexican government— recognizing the independence of Texas. In this way, the Southern slave owners obtained an immense territory of about 269,000 square miles of rich lands for the extension of the slave system.

The slaveholding interests pressed Congress for the admission of Texas into the Union but this found the bitter opposition of the Free-Soil forces of the North and West. The slaveholders openly hoped to carve out from five to seven slave states from the Texas Territory thus ensuring Southern control of Congress. The conflict remained unsolved until 1845 when, after the election of James K. Polk on an annexationist platform, Texas was given statehood. To restore the balance between the rival forces in the Senate, Iowa was admitted as a free state the next year. The admission of Texas constituted a great victory for the aggressive, Southern slaveholders.

The War on Mexico (1846-1848)

The war on Mexico was the natural result of US expansionism. The government of the United States under the control of the slaveholding interests and inspired in the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, sought to expand the cotton plantation system all over the continent. Mexico, atomized and ruined by civil war, was an easy prey. President James K. Polk (1844-1848) and his cabinet, acting as representatives of the slaveholding interests of the nation, deliberately prepared and provoked the conflict. The immediate causes of the war were the seizure of Texas and California by the United States. As we have seen, Texas, after a pseudo-rebellion had become an “independent” republic in 1836, and was finally incorporated to the Union as a state in 1845. The Mexican government had denounced this robbery and had refused to recognize either the “independence” of Texas or its annexation to the United States.

To seize California from Mexico, the United States followed the same general strategy it had used to grab Florida from Spain. Between 1825 and 1846, a wave of aggressive “pioneers” rushed into the valleys of California. Thomas O. Larkin was the key figure of the conspiracy. Larkin, a wealthy businessman, settled in Monterrey, California, since 1832, was a confidential agent of the US government. In October 1845, he received instructions from President Polk to prepare a revolt and declare California “independent”. Commodore Sloat, commanding US forces on the Pacific, received secret orders to seize California as soon as war broke out between Mexico and the United States.

The US government had tried unsuccessfully to “buy” California under the Jackson’s (1828-32) and the Tyler’s (1840-44) administrations. In November 1845, President Polk sent John Slidell to Mexico with an offer to “buy” New Mexico and California for \$40,000,000, but the Mexican government refused to receive Slidell or to listen to his proposals.

Having this diplomatic move failed, President Polk decided that something had to be done to force Mexico to fight, something that would offer him a pretext for a war declaration. The southern boundary of Texas was Nueces River but the US government claimed that the boundary was the Rio Grande. This dispute provided an occasion for trouble and, in January 1846, the President ordered General Zachary Taylor, commanding the Southwest Federal troops (who had occupied Texas in June 1845) to cross Nueces River and take up a position on the Rio Grande. The invasion of Mexican territory by US troops might cause an incident that would give the United States an excuse for a declaration of war. On April 25 1846, the Mexicans, enraged by the violation of their country’s boundary, attacked one of Taylor’s patrols.

Even before the news of hostilities arrived, President Polk and the US cabinet had decided to send a war message to Congress. Just before the message was delivered, news came from the skirmish on the Rio Grande and Polk added to the message that “Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our country and shed American blood upon American soil.” Congress passed a resolution to the effect that “...by the act of the republic of Mexico a state of war exists.”

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While war was beginning, California was seized. In June 1846, General John C. Fremont (who had been sent by the US government to “explore” the region) and a group of US settlers attacked the Mexican town of Sonora and established the “independent” republic of California. It should be noted that this action was taken before news of the Mexican war had reached California.

The Mexican people offered a gallant resistance to the invader, but to no avail. The United States possessed an overwhelming military superiority and, worst of all; Mexico was torn by civil war. During the two years of struggle, there were four successive governments in Mexico. In spite of desperate Mexican resistance, the US troops captured Mexico City in September 1847, and on 2 February 1848, the Mexican government was forced to sign the humiliating Guadalupe-Hidalgo treaty by which a vast portion of Mexican territory was surrendered to the invaders. The United States paid \$15,000 000 to disguise the expansionist raid.

The country seized from Mexico, including Texas and the area obtained by the Gadsen Purchase of 1853, added to the United States approximately 944,825 square miles, a region enormously rich in natural resources. It comprises the present day states of Texas, New Mexico, California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Colorado and part of Wyoming.

The war of plunder on Mexico, which Foster regarded in 1954 the “...biggest land steal and the most barbarously unjust war in the history of the United States and of the entire Western Hemisphere...” aroused widespread opposition in the very United States. It was openly protested by many trade unions and by every honest person. It was also opposed by the industrialists, who saw it as an affair of the landholding interests. One of their newspapers read, “The whole world knows that it is Mexico that has been imposed on and that our people are the robbers.” Abraham Lincoln and many other politicians bitterly denounced the crime. R. W. Emerson, the American poet wrote in indignation:

Behold the famous States

Harrying Mexico

With rifle and with knife

Even among the army, opposition to the outrageous attack was widespread. The then Lieutenant, and later general during the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant, wrote later, “I do not consider there was ever a more wicked war than that waged by the United States on Mexico.”

The war had devastating result for the future development of Mexico that was stripped of more than half of its territory containing vast areas of rich agricultural lands, immense deposits of oil, copper and other minerals, as well as incalculable amounts of other resources. Because of the war, a large national minority of Mexicans (scornfully called “Chicanos”) was left in the Southwest of the United States. Mexican immigrants who cross the frontier illegally in search of jobs and opportunities, are discriminated against, denied many of their civil rights, and subjected to exploitation as hand-laborers.

The plunder of Mexico gave a deathblow to the prestige of the United States in general and to the Monroe Doctrine in particular. The countries of Latin America and all the countries of the world realized the aggressive and predatory nature of the foreign policy of the nation that arrogantly claimed to be the cradle of freedom and democracy.

Oregon and Alaska

US continental expansion in the Nineteenth Century concluded with the acquisition of Oregon and Alaska. Oregon Country was a British possession since the late Eighteenth Century. From then on British fur traders exported important quantities of sea otter pelts from Oregon to China. Religious missions from the United States began to settle in the region by the 1830's. During the next decade, a wave of pioneers began to pour in by the thousand in caravans of “... heavy white wagons creeping on in slow progressions”.

In 1843, the US settlers in Oregon organized a provisional government and began to demand the whole area for the United States. The US government claimed the entire region south of the 54°40' line (“54-40 or fight” was the aggressive slogan of the expansionists) but, engaged in war with Mexico it had to be content with the 49th parallel as the Northern boundary of California, obtained by the Oregon Treaty in June, 1846.

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The last great continental annexation was Alaska. The Russians had discovered Alaska by 1741, and it had been under the rule of the Tsars since then. In 1867, after several years of unofficial negotiations, the Tsar, in financial needs, consented to sell Alaska. The United States paid \$7,200,000 for an area of 586,400 square miles that contains immense natural resources.

The Plunder of the Native Americans West of the Mississippi

During the first four decades of the Nineteenth Century, most of the Native Americans living east of the Mississippi were expropriated of their lands and forcibly driven to the west of the big river where they were promised to hold their new lands forever. Only small groups of the once numerous, and strong tribes remained behind.

In the West, the Native Americans soon saw their lands robbed again by miners, squatters, land speculators, planters, and railway builders. The government of the United States, acting on behalf of the interests involved in the colonization effort, carried out a bloody military campaign against the tribes to expel them of their lands or to exterminate them altogether. The Plains tribes were a more formidable foe than the eastern tribes were.

He was a Nomad... He was a marvelous horseman, could drop his body upon either side of his horse screening himself from his enemies' weapons while hanging by his heels. He carried a shield which was made of buffalo hide so hardened and tough that no arrow or bullet could go through it unless it was hit at a right angle. He could tear along on this fleet horse with his bundle of one hundred arrows so conveniently placed that he could keep one or more in the air all the time —with force enough behind each arrow to drive the shaft — entirely through the body of a buffalo.

Although the Native Americans resisted removal with great courage in a long heroic and desperate struggle, the technical superiority of the invaders and, above all, the disunion prevailing among the tribes led them to defeat. To crush the resistance of the Native Americans the great buffalo herds (the basic food supply of the Plains tribes) were hunted and shot until the animal was extinguished.

The last important armed resistance of the Native Americans was the fight of the Apaches under the lead of Chief Geronimo, in the 1880's. Geronimo and his men were finally defeated in 1886, and the whole tribe, including women and children remained in a military prison until 1914.

By the end of the 1880's, the "Red Man" had been militarily defeated and robbed of his lands throughout the entire area of the United States. The survivors were rounded up in concentration camps, called Indian reservations.

Cotton and Industry

Agriculture

The most important economic result of the territorial expansion was the enormous growth of the area available for agriculture. From its very beginning, US agriculture was characterized by its specialization. Since colonial days, two distinct agricultural regions took shape: the North and the South.

The North can be roughly sub-divided into the Northeast, comprising the states which emerged on the former New England and Middle Colonies, and the Northwest, a vast region to the north of the Ohio River, and constantly extending to the west, which included the Territories and states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, and Nebraska, in the main. In the period following the Independence War, the Northwest was colonized by hundreds of thousands of farm families coming from Europe and from the eastern states. From 1844 to 1854, almost 3 million immigrants braved the Atlantic crossing to the United States, most of them pouring to the West. The process of colonization of the West advanced quickly during the decades that preceded the Civil War. By 1858, Minnesota's population had grown large enough for statehood, the admission of Kansas was delayed until 1861 only for political reasons, not for lack of population, and people were moving into Nebraska.

The Northwest was an overwhelmingly agricultural region. Agriculture was based on the farm system. The small farmers' agriculture aimed first to self-sufficiency. Corn, rye, and wheat provided breadstuff, while cattle, hogs and chicken assured meat, milk, butter, and eggs to the farmers' table. A small flock of sheep and a field of flax furnished wool and linen for the family clothing. Almost every farm had an orchard.

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The development of a commercial agriculture and the industrial revolution led to the development of a class of farmers and to the formation of a rural bourgeoisie. The farmer was always forced to produce a surplus to meet the installment payments on the land or to buy salt, iron, gunpowder, lead, and other necessities that the farm could not produce. Caravans of horses tied to one another and carrying farm produce were driven across the mountains to eastern markets. When the products became too bulky, the trails were widened into roads and great covered wagons were used. Flatboats also carried products down the Mississippi to the busy port of New Orleans where they were reshipped to the other coastal towns and to Europe.

The western farmer's first need in the way of equipment was a new plow. Eighteenth Century plows were crude wooden affairs, so heavy that they sometimes required eight or ten oxen to drag them, yet scarcely scratching the surface of the soil. Imported and homemade iron plows proved unsuccessful until 1837 when John Deere, an Illinois Blacksmith, produced a steel plow that was rapidly popularized. This plow was capable to cut deep, clean furrows in the prairie sod and was light enough to be driven by the weaker but fast-moving horses.

Significant improvements were made in machines specially designed for wheat growing. The need for better methods was particularly acute in harvesting since when the grain was ready it had to be cut, bound, and gathered immediately. During the first half of the Nineteenth Century, wheat was generally cut with cradles (the cradle permitted the reaper to cut the grain in a wide swath as he moved through the field and deposit it in neat piles where it could be easily bound). After several unsuccessful attempts, various models of horse-driven reapers were patented in the United States and Europe. The invention came into extensive use when C. H. McCormick opened a factory in Chicago in 1847, which was soon turning several thousand reapers a year. In the 1850s, progress was made in the development of mechanical wheat-binders and mechanical threshers.

Corn growers also received the benefit of planters, cultivators, and, other mechanical innovations and tools. Knowledge of the new methods was popularized by agricultural fairs and farm journals. By 1859, the national corn production reached 838,000,000 bushels and wheat production soared to 173,000,000 bushels.

Fresh lands, larger farms, more machinery and improved transportation gave the Western farmers distinct advantages over their Eastern competitors. The center of wheat and corn growing moved, inexorably west and the livestock industry followed the Corn Belt. In 1840, the leading corn states were Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. By 1860, they were surpassed by Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana. As the production of great staples concentrated in the West and South, eastern farmers began to specialize on the production of perishable produce, for which the proximity to the urban markets was essential. Near each of the great cities' market gardening and dairying increased. New York State became a center of butter and cheese manufacture. Every other large city in the East was soon granted its supply of dairy products from the nearby pasturelands. Fruit orchards were also expanded and given scientific care. Apples, peaches, strawberries, Blackberries and many varieties of melons were soon grown in large quantities. By the 1840s the tin canister, for packaging perishables, became widely used extending the market for such products even to men at sea.

The rapid growth of commercial agriculture and the introduction of the machinery and innovations of the industrial revolution led to the development of capitalist farming. Once subsistence economy gave place to production for the market the farmer found himself under the grip of forces over which he had less and less control. To meet the requirements of the growing market, the farmer needed to specialize on his staples for export and to mechanize production. Hofstadter calculates that by 1860 about \$250,000,000 had been invested in farm implements and machines, most of this sum in the wheat farms. The squatter, under the merciless exploitation of merchants, land speculators, and usurers, was usually incapable to afford the new requirements and had to sell out and move to the West. New, larger farms emerged and the rural bourgeoisie developed. In the raising capitalist farms, the recent technical innovations were quickly introduced and hired labor was increasingly used.

The South became the Cotton Kingdom. During the last decades of the Eighteenth Century, the slave plantation system seemed to many people a declining institution. Tobacco rising dropped sharply in the tidewater region, mainly because of the exhaustion of the soils, and, although its production was begun in the piedmont countries, it remained stationary, chiefly because of increased competition from many tropical countries. Rice growing continued in about the same volume as in late colonial days, and indigo soon passed out of commercial production.

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By that time, the industrial revolution in British textile industry created an enormous demand for raw cotton. British cotton imports, which had amounted to 5,000,000 pounds in 1775, rose to 56,000,000 pounds by 1800. To meet the growing demand for cotton that Georgian planters began to experiment with a new species of cotton from the Bahamas about 1786. However, the expansion of cotton cultivation was prevented by the high cost of its production. In particular, the process of separating the fiber from the seed was a too slow and laborious hand process. It took a slave nearly a full day to remove the cottonseed from but one pound of the raw fiber.

The solution to this problem was found by Ely Whitney, a Connecticut college graduate who traveled South in pursuit of a position as tutor and became acquainted with the problem of cotton production. In 1793, his experiments resulted in the invention of the cotton gin. The famous machine brought about a huge saving of labor. It enabled a slave to clean about 150 pounds of cotton per day. When steam power was applied to the cotton gin, a slave's production rose to 1,000 pounds per day.

This revolutionary innovation resulted in the rapid spread of cotton production all over the South. In 1792, the year before the invention of the cotton gin, the annual cotton production of the United States was about 6,000 bales (bale= 600 pounds); in 1814 production reached nearly 150,000 bales; by 1835 it rose to 1,000,000 bales; in 1842, 2,000,000; in 1852, 3,000,000; in 1859, 4,500,000. By then, cotton constituted more than one-half the value of all US exports. About four fifths of the 1859, crop were exported to Europe, chiefly to Great Britain.

Cotton became king in the South. The great cotton kingdom centered in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia, where 68 per cent of the crop was grown. Most of the rest came from the peripheral states of Texas, Arkansas, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Because of the large capital investments required for cotton growing and the low productivity of slave labor, the plantation system was only profitable upon very fertile soils. One crop cultivation and the application of unscientific methods of production depleted the soil in a few years, so the planter was periodically forced to buy new virgin lands to the west and move. Exhausted lands fell in value and large areas in the Southeast grew impoverished and depopulated. Soil exhaustion and the rising price of slaves made Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina slave-breeding states. Here the slaves were raised like cattle for export to the cotton-producing regions.

The cotton boom led to the expansion of plantation agriculture and to the rise in the number of slaves. From 697,624 slaves there were in the United States in 1790, the figure climbed swiftly to about 4,000,000 in 1860. Slave prices fluctuated with the market for cotton, but the general trend was upward. Field hands, valued \$ 400 in 1800, were paid about \$2,000 in 1860. The profits of the big planters also increased with the growth of production and the exploitation of larger masses of slaves. The average cost of keeping a slave was \$20 per year and the annual profit per slave was approximately \$83.

The expansion of slave plantation economy produced a drastically uneven distribution of wealth and income. From the approximately 8,000,000 white inhabitants of the Southern states, only about 325 000 families (less than a 6 per cent) owned slaves, and almost all the others were poor farmers, who generally had hardly higher economic living standards than the slaves did. The poor whites were petty farmers who, unable to compete with the cheaper labor of the slaves or to obtain a piece of fertile land, had retired to the backcountry. They lived in such a state of ignorance and want that a contemporary wrote, "Good Lord! I've heard a heap about the poor folks of the North, but if you ever saw any poorer people than them) (the poor whites) I should like to know what they live on. Must be a miracle if they live at all I don't see how these people live."

The largest number of the slaveholders, owned fewer than 10 slaves and could hardly be considered planters at all, most of them being small farmers who worked in the fields beside their slaves. About three or four thousand families owned the best lands and received three-fourths of the returns from the exports of cotton. This wealthy minority constituted the arrogant aristocracy of the South, a clique of big slaveholders who dominated Southern life and struggled to maintain the outrageous system and to extend it over the whole country, Central and South America.

Besides cotton, other important staples were cultivated in the South: tobacco was grown in the upper South; rice and sugar were cultivated in relatively small areas by rich planters who could afford the heavy capital expenditures that were required in growing, harvesting, and processing these crops. The South also

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produced an important percent of the country's corn, hemp, peas, beans, wheat and livestock. This is indicative that general farming prevailed over large districts, particularly in the Border States (Missouri, Kentucky, Virginia)

Most planters attempted to meet some of the food needs of their, slaves by growing some corn in their states, but as they concentrated on their staples, this had to be supplemented with purchases in the Border States or with products sent down the Mississippi from the Middle West.

The Nineteenth Century Southern socio-economic system was based on the cruel exploitation of Black slaves. The slave system of the South contained within itself all the typical traits and peculiarities of the slave production system, but it had certain essential characteristics that made it a singular institution. The growth and expansion of slavery was related to industrial development and to the creation of the world market. As Karl Marx said of slavery, in the Americas:

Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery credits, etc. Without slavery, you have no cotton; without cotton, you have no modern industry. It is slavery that has given the colonies their value, it is the colonies that have created world trade; and it is world trade that is the pre-condition of large-scale industry.

US slavery was fed by capitalism as "a commercial system of exploitation", since it was the base for the production of staples for the world market, upon which it was dependant. The Southern plantation system was a complex combination of slavery and capitalism in which the new, capitalist content was inserted to old economic modes and the results of this dual system of production took the form of profit. This was possible just because capitalism is, like the slave system, based on the exploitation of the people, in this case the proletarians, the waged slaves the capitalists. H. Aptheker writes that:

...the peculiar feature of this staple-producing agricultural system was the fact that the laborers were owned by, were chattels of the bosses or slaveholders. And the slaveholders, like employers the world over, were in business that is, ran cotton or sugar or tobacco plantations for the gain they could drive out of their workers, whom they literally owned.

Great time and energy was spent by the slaveholders and their apologists on behalf of the repugnant institution of slavery. To this end, all kinds of omissions, falsifications, and distortions were made. The fundamental aim of the defenders of the slave system, or of the segregation system of US society which developed later, was to make, people believe that,

Normal slave condition differed greatly from the lurid picture of Northern abolitionist ...that the slaves were rarely seriously injured..., that they were provided clothes, shelter, enough food to keep them in good health...and that... the planter fed and cared for both the slave children and the disabled and aged.

It is also argued that slavery "Christianized a heathen people and gradually elevated them..." and that it was a normal condition for the Blacks because they are "...by racial quality submissive."

But Southern life was very far from that delightful social system depicted by the old and the new defenders of white supremacy. So that a slave system functions, it is necessary to maintain the slaves in deep ignorance and under the most barbarous tyranny, and it results, as a logical consequence, in revolts on the part of the enslaved human beings.

The slaves' standard of living was extremely low since they were provided a bare minimum of their animal needs in normal times, and were subjected, to cruel punishments and tortures for the minor resistance. In 1842, J. J. Buckingman a British traveler in the South described a plantation that he visited. He writes that all the slaves, from eight or nine years old upwards worked in the fields from early morning until dark every day throughout the year, except a day or two at Christmas. The allowance of food consisted of two gallons of corn per week for every field, hand, half that quantity for working boys and girls, and a quarter for little children. The slaves were obliged to grind this corn in their "spare time", and it was then boiled in water "...boiled corn and water only, and barely a sufficient quantity of this for subsistence..." and he continues "...of clothes, the men and boys had coarse woolen jackets and trousers once a year, without shirt or any other garment."

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At nights, the slaves were literally “packed” in infested and unsanitary cabins where they were locked to “rest”. In small plantations, the average yearly cost of the Blacks’ food, clothing, shelter, etc., was \$ 35. On large plantations, it was about \$15. The average for young and old throughout the South was only about \$20 per year. These were the prevailing living and working conditions on the Black slaves in normal times.

The slave system was directly affected by cyclical capitalist crisis, by the fluctuations of the prices of the staples, by the exhaustion of the soil; and these economic calamities fell severely upon the shoulders of the slaves bringing them starvation and increased misery. Under these conditions, mortality rate was very high, so that “An old slave was something of a rarity.”

To keep the Black race in bondage the slaveholders made use of various devices, one of which was brutality.

“Slavery was systematized cruelty, the slaves were machines to be driven as much as possible for the production of profit, and machines of an intelligent nature which had to be terrified and chained and beaten in order for their owners to maintain possession.”

Slave codes, which existed since colonial days, were strengthened with the growth and extension of slavery. The codes were sets of laws instituted in each slave state for the suppression of the slaves. They forbade Blacks to own arms, to leave the plantations without a written passage, to assemble unless a white man was present, to trade without the master’s consent, to keep a dog, to ride horses without permission, to testify in court in any case involving whites, etc. Any violation might be punished by the first freeman who met the offender. If the slave returned a blow, it was lawful to kill him. It was also a crime to teach a slave how to read or write, or to write or say anything which might create unrest among the slaves.

The slaves were kept into their status by force of arms. There were in the South large detachments of regular troops of the US Army, a militia in each state, mounted companies who patrolled the countryside by night, and armed masters and overseers in every plantation.

The minor offense received barbarous punishments. There are innumerable examples of slaves sold away from their family, shot, hanged, beaten to death, mutilated, burned alive. Let us see what A. Stoddard, a Major of the US Army said of Louisiana, where he lived from 1804 to 1809:

...cruel and unusual punishments are daily inflicted on these wretched creatures, enfeebled, oppressed with hunger, labor and the lash. The scenes of misery and distress constantly witnessed along the coast of the Delta, the wounds and lacerations occasioned by demoralized masters and overseers most of whom exhibit a strange compound of ignorance and depravity, torture the feelings of the passing stranger and wring blood from his heart. Good God! Why sleeps thy vengeance!

With the rapid growth of slave plantation economy, the churches —except the Quakers— abandoned their late 18th century support of some sort of gradual emancipation and either kept silent about slavery, as in the North, or defended it as in the South. The preachers in their sermons to the slaves only had a message: be meek and obedient. They were assured that it was God’s will that they occupy their lowly position, that if they did not perform their tasks well they were compelled to suffer eternally, in Hell, that when they were disrespectful, insolent, or sullen, the Lord was greatly offended, and that if their master subjected them to abuses, they should leave the masters punishment to God.

A book of sermons recommended for ministers preaching to Black slaves read “... what faults you are guilty of towards your masters and mistress are faults done against God Himself who hath set your masters and mistress over you in his own stead. Your masters and mistresses are God’s overseers and if you are faulty towards them, God will punish you severely in the next world”.

The majority of the big Southern planters belonged to the Episcopal Church. Church dignitaries were usually rich planters; for instance, Bishop Polk, of the Episcopal Church of Louisiana, in 1854, was the owner of 400 slaves.

The planters also carried out a successful policy aimed at dividing the poor whites and the slaves based on race hatred. Division among the slaves themselves was also nursed by giving house servants a better treatment than to field hands. From among domestic slaves the masters recruited spies and traitors who informed them about the slaves conspiracies.

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The planters felt that the freed slaves—in 1820 they numbered 233,634, that is, one eighth of the Blacks—constituted a threat to the slave system, and tried to get rid of those manumitted Blacks by sending them back to Africa. In December 1816, the American Colonization Society was founded. This organization, backed by Southern slaveholders and the US government had as its objective to transport free Blacks to Africa and to colonize them there. The colonization plan obtained the support of many well-meaning people, which created confusion and dissension in Black ranks for decades. But the most advanced groups eagerly rejected and opposed the Society and the colonization plan. Most of the Blacks rejected transportation, proclaimed the United States their home, and denounced their determination to stay in that country, “come what might”. In 1819, the US Government appropriated 5,100,000 for establishing an African colony. In 1821, Liberia was founded in West Africa, but only a few Blacks actually returned to Africa.

The Black slaves, in spite of the brutal system of suppression under which they lived, bitterly resisted slavery with all the means at their disposal. The slaves “slowed up” while at work, they broke their instruments of production, they refused to bear children, they ran away, they organized armed insurrections, they killed their overseers and masters, they committed suicide, they actively participated in the abolitionist movement, they, whenever possible, worked in their spare time to try to accumulate money to buy their freedom or that of their dears, they enlisted in the armed forces during the wars of the period, etc.

Flight and insurrection were two important methods by which the slaves tried to obtain their liberty. Tens of thousands of slaves were able to escape from their enslavers to the Native Americans, to the Mexicans, to the British armies during the Revolutionary period, and to the swamps, mountains, and forests of the South, where they established communities of maroons. During the pre-Civil War decades, the “Underground Railroad” or “U. G.” was organized. The purpose of the celebrated Underground Railroad was to help slaves escape from the South into the North, usually to Canada. Groups of fleeing slaves, called “trains”, were led by “conductors” who knew the routes and the “stations”, or houses of sympathizers, where the Blacks were fed and sheltered in transit. Despite the incredible hardships of the journey, tens of thousands of slaves gained their freedom by this means.

In spite of the tremendous risks of this task, hundreds of thousands of people worked in the U. G. The leading organizers and operators were free Blacks and Quakers. The most famous of the many brave fighters engaged in this heroic task was Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave woman. She worked as conductor of the U. G. during the 1850's, making about 19 trips to the South and helping 300 slaves escape. This hero became a fabulous figure known among the slaves as “Moses”. The slaveholders offered \$540,000 for her, dead or alive, but she was never caught. During the Civil War, she led armed attacks against the Confederate forces and collected vital military information.

The slave's conspiracies and revolts were a regular phenomenon in Southern life. Although the press of the South seldom reflected slave unrest; there are at least 250 reported plots and insurrections of the slaves. With the rapid growth of slave population during the Nineteenth Century, because of the cotton boom, slave revolts became larger and more frequent. The planters combated mercilessly every sign of slave insubordination. Rigorous semi-military measures were taken throughout the South to prevent the slaves' uprisings and the slave codes, and the other safeguards of the slaveholders were strengthened. The slaves, nevertheless, with courage and skill, succeeded in organizing revolts. The best known are those of Gabriel (1800), Denmark Vessey (1822) and Nat Turner (1833).

In August 1800, a conspiracy was discovered in Virginia due to the betrayal of some slaves. It had been carefully organized for months and it included tens of thousands of slaves. Their leader was Gabriel, a slave only twenty-four years old. Scores of slaves were imprisoned and tried. Thirty-five, Gabriel among them, were executed. Reports from contemporary witnesses testify that the slaves were loyal to their determination of “death or liberty” in the trials and when meeting death. When one of them was asked what he had to say to the court in his defense he answered:

I have nothing more to offer than what General Washington would have had to offer, had he been taken by the British officers and put to trial by them. I have ventured my life in endeavoring to obtain the liberty of my countrymen, and I am a willing sacrifice to their cause; and I beg as a favor, that I may be immediately led to execution. I know that you have pre-determined to shed my blood; why then all this mockery of a trial.

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During the following two decades scores of plots were discovered and many insurrections put down in the South. Free Blacks and whites were commonly implicated in these efforts for freedom. In spite of the ferocious repression with which the insurrections were met, and the increasing crop of martyrs, the slaves continued plotting and rebelling.

In June 1822, one of the most extensive conspiracies in the history of US slavery was averted in Charleston, South Carolina. It was led by Denmark Vessey, a former slave who had bought his freedom. The insurrection was carefully planned. It involved several thousand slaves. Hundreds of pike heads, bayonets, and daggers had been manufactured by the Blacks, and Vessey was in contact with the Dominican Republic from where he hoped they would receive help.

The failure was the result of a betrayal of Devany, a favorite slave, and of the work of spies who were introduced among the rebels' ranks. One hundred and thirty one Blacks were arrested, 35 were hanged and several scores were transported. Four white men were fined and imprisoned for helping the rebels. Federal troops had to be brought in during the time of the executions and an attempt to revolt in the city was suppressed. The slaves died courageously, most of them in silence.

The slaves' unrest continued until the 1830's. There were constant plots and minor uprising throughout the South, all of them put down by means of cruel repression. In August 1833, Southern slaveholders were terrified by the actions of Nat Turner, a slave from Southampton County, Virginia. Turner, a deeply religious man, felt that he had been entrusted by God with the task to free his people, "...for the time was fast approaching when the first should be the last and the last should be the first"

In August 21, Nat Turner and five other slaves started their fight against slavery. They raided over a vast area killing all the white masters that lived in the neighborhood and freeing their slaves. Within twenty-four hours, the group of rebels counted nearly 70, some of them mounted. The group was overwhelmed by state and federal troops and in the following days, over a hundred slaves were killed or tortured to death. Sixteen Blacks, including Turner, were tried and executed by the slaveholders.

During the following decades, until, and during, the Civil War, slave unrest mounted continually. It is impossible for us to make an account of the very many conspiracies and revolts, or to list the names of the thousands of martyrs. Besides, due to the efforts of the slave owners and their press to minimize or obliterate the real amount of slave rebelliousness, much of this will never be known.

The Crisis of the Slave System

In spite of the rapid expansion that slavery underwent in the South of the United States during the Nineteenth Century, this system suffered from internal ills that led to the inevitable disappearance of this barbarous form of human exploitation. The United States was rapidly becoming industrialized and slave labor did not suit the needs of these new modes of production and ways of life. Slavery had accommodated to the pre-industrial forms of capitalism existing in the USA up to mid-Nineteenth Century, as analyzed above. Once the nation started its industrial revolution, slavery was doomed.

The fundamental reason for the inefficiency of the slave system was the low productivity of slave labor. The lack of an incentive —but the lash— made the slave perform his forced labor reluctantly and indifferently. A typical form of protest from the slaves was the destruction of the instruments of production. Hence, the principle universally applied in this method of production: only to employ the rudest and heaviest implement and such as is difficult to damage owing to their sheer clumsiness. The constant struggle of the slaves for freedom destroyed productive forces, weakened the power of the planters, and threatened the very existence of the whole system.

An unavoidable principle, to keep the Blacks in bondage was to maintain the slaves in deep ignorance. Hence, slavery was, contrary to a scientific agriculture, or to industrialization. Only a monoculture system, in which labor was reduced to a series of routine operations, and in which the most primitive methods of production were used, was possible. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the fertility of the soil declined while there were decreasing possibilities to widen the cotton area.

An industrial society requires educated workers. If slaves are offered the possibility to receive an education, they will realize the extremely humiliating and inhuman conditions in which they live and will fight for freedom. Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave who built himself an education and was one of the historical leaders of Black Americans wrote, "'education' is another word for 'freedom'".

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The slave system consumed up almost all the capital it produced. The planter was forced to put the profits he obtained into fresh lands and slaves—as we have seen, the price of slaves rose astronomically. In this way, no available capital was left with which to build industry in the South, or even to finance the commercialization of the cotton crop, which, was left to the Northern and British merchants. As a result, the South developed a growing colonial-like relationship with the North and Great Britain. The planters provided Northern and British capitalists with raw materials and received the necessary manufactures and capital from them. In the South many people grew aware of their dependence upon the North. One of them protested thus situation by saying:

We want Bibles; brooms; bucket and books; and we go to the North, we want pens, ink, paper, wafers and envelopes, and we go to the North; we want shoes; hats, handkerchiefs, umbrellas; and pocket knives and we go to the North; we want furniture, crockery; glassware and pianos; and we go to the North; we want toys, primers; school books, fashionable apparel, machinery, medicines; tombstones and thousands other things and we go to the North for them all.

Under the existing conditions—especially because of the rising price of the slaves—only the largest plantation, with the most fertile lands, managed in the most skillful manner, could survive. “Internally the chattel slave system was devouring itself externally it was being strangled for lack of room to expand” The slave system was also a check to the cultural development of the South. It produced the social conditions that helped to account for the cultural and moral degradation of the Southerner, both Black and white. As productive activities belonged to the “inferior” race, it was shameful for any white to do anything that might resemble in anyway work.

The aristocratic ruling classes of the South were an idle group of planters, only interested in fox—chasing, cock fighting, gambling, and drinking who controlled politics, culture and religion. They imposed their will over the millions of slaves who served them and over the millions of poor whites and petty farmers who starved in the worst lands of the region. Helper wrote in *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It* (1857), that slavery was the root of all the shame poverty, ignorance, tyranny and imbecility of the South”

Another powerful factor that contributed greatly to the destruction of the inhuman slave system was the organization of all anti-slavery forces into increasingly large and militant abolitionist movements. It is true that the inevitable overthrow of the institution of slavery resulted from the growth of industrial capitalism and the aggravation of the existing contradictions between industrialization and the outmoded system of slave labor. Nevertheless, this revolutionary change did not come of itself. It was the result of the struggle of men and women, Black and white, who sowed the seed of abolitionism by agitating, organizing, writing, setting up the Underground Railroad and, finally, succeeded in arousing all the progressive and democratic forces of the nation to the Civil War.

The abolitionist movement underwent a quick growth since the 1830's mainly in the North. Before 1850, almost 2,000 organizations comprising hundreds of thousands of abolitionists had been formed. William L. Garrison was an outstanding abolitionist throughout this period. The work of his American Anti-Slavery Society did a good job in propagandizing abolitionist ideas. Although slavery was an atavism doomed by history, it was not to die out automatically only because of the pressing economic forces at work. The slave system was still profitable in certain regions, and it was so deeply rooted in Southern life and institutions that a revolution was necessary to remove it.

Industrial Development

During the Nineteenth Century, the United States of America underwent the industrial revolution. This process involved the revolutionary transformation of the technical base of US manufacturing, the eventual victory of the factory system over the outmoded methods of handicraft production, and deep changes on all spheres of US society. The growth of the factory system started in the Northeast—the region roughly corresponding to the New England and the Middle Colonies of the colonial era—and proceeded irregularly, but with increasing intensity, toward the West.

Between the end of the Revolution and the Civil War, there was a stormy growth of industry, finance, transportation, and agriculture in the United States. This development was uneven. The basic tendency of capitalism to produce more than its lagging markets can consume led the whole capitalist system to cyclical crises, the worst of which were in 1819, 1837, 1854, 1857 and 1860. During these overproduction

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crises, the biggest investors used the hard times to squeeze out smaller ones, which led to the concentration of capital in fewer hands.

The rapid industrialization of the country—in 1850 the output of manufacturers exceeded value that of agriculture, and in 1860 the United States was fourth in world industry—led to the growth of a powerful capitalist class and the rise of the industrial proletariat. The whole period was punctuated by the fierce struggles of these contending classes.

After the Revolutionary War, US home market for standard manufactured products underwent a remarkable growth, creating a powerful stimulus to industrial development. Although the United States remained, largely, an economic appendix of industrialized Europe for a long time, the increasing demand for manufactures, the wars that intermittently interrupted European supplies, and protective tariffs provided for an ever-rising demand of manufactures that granted a sufficiently high rate of profits for undertakers.

The rise of the home market was the result of several factors: The very growth of US population—in 1790, US population was about 4,000,000, and by 1860 it had risen to nearly 31,500,000, an increase of almost eight times. The proletarianization of the population (through the ruin of farmers and handicraftsmen). The shift of the farmer subsistence economy into a commercial economy. And the colonization of the West. As different regions specialized in particular commodities exchange among them increased. Exchange itself was made easier by the large amounts of gold mined in California and by the expansion of the banking system. During the war between England and France that began in 1793, US trade underwent a significant advance. US merchants carried provisions and lumber to the belligerents on both sides, picked up goods in one European port and sold them in another, gained new markets in the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and often sold their ships as well as their cargoes in the inflated wartime market.

Important trading relations were also established with China and other Asian countries. US merchants obtained high profits by exchanging ginseng and furs for Chinese tea, silk, furniture and chinaware. US foreign trade kept growing throughout the first half of the Nineteenth Century. The combined imports and exports of the nation in 1843 were \$125,250,000. By 1860 this figure had multiplied five and a half times when it reached \$687,200,000.

Much of the necessary capital for the industrial take off came from foreign investments and loans—mainly British—but a large amount of capital had been accumulated in the United States in the preceding period. The basic source of primitive accumulation during the colonial era was foreign trade; Triangular Trade, smuggling, and, in particular slave trade, were the roots of huge fortunes, first invested in shipping and inland commerce in land and slaves, and, later on, in industry. After the Revolutionary War, the process of accumulation of capital intensified by means of the widening of the forcing market, the fraudulent disposition of the public domain, land speculation, the relentless plunder of the Native Americans and the western colonists, and the exploitation of the wage laborers in the new manufactures and factories.

As industry and agriculture grew, banking developed. The financial institutions required to service the needs of growing capitalism expanded rapidly. By 1860, there were 1,601 banks in the country; and soon a huge financial structure covered the nation providing every town and city with banks. Stock exchanges were established and industrial companies were organized.

The scarcity of labor force for the rising factories constituted a serious trouble for US capitalists since the availability of relatively free lands in the West was a powerful appeal to the dispossessed. This insufficiency was largely satisfied by immigration and by the exploitation of women and children. The number of European immigrants continually rose during the century. While in 1832, about 60,000 alien passengers arrived in US ports, by 1851, more than 400,000 came. Between 1820 and 1860 about 5,500,000 foreigners entered the country seeking to escape European hardships by beginning life anew in America. Immigration was actively encouraged by propaganda. The United States was presented as the country of opportunity where land was cheap and wages were high. Most of the immigrants were young adults who swelled the work force of the free North as industrial and construction workers, farm laborers, or farmers.

Labor scarcity and the greed for profits led to the widespread exploitation of women and children. From the 1,300,000 industrial workers there were by 1860, about 25 percent were women. The manufacturers sent agents—people called the agent's wagon a "slaver"—into the country districts to round up farm girls and persuade them to come to the towns to work in the mills. The agents were paid more for the girls from far away induced to work in the factories since those girls found it more difficult to return home. In some places,

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entire families, men, women, and children, were employed in the mills. Children were preferred for they were employed for a pittance. The children's working day was from sunrise to sunset —up to fifteen or sixteen hours— with thirty minutes for breakfast and the same for dinner.

The Revolution of 1775-1783, was a basic factor in releasing the forces that led to the industrial revolution. The restrictive economic and political domination of Great Britain was broken, free access to the world's markets was opened, and feudal remnants were destroyed. US capitalists were placed in front of a vast, virgin continent, plentifully endowed with almost every basic material needed for industrialization, a continent that, as we have seen, they quickly overran and seized for themselves from the Native Americans and from other peoples.

The technical premises to industrialization were created, in the main, by the industrial revolution, which had begun in Great Britain. Indeed, several discoveries and inventions were partially or totally developed in the United States because of the need to save labor. In 1835, the US Patent Office granted 752 patents, and by 1860, the number rose to 4,700, many of them of great importance like the steamboat (1787), paper machine (1809), reaper (1831), telegraph (1832), harvester (1836), phosphorous match (1836), vulcanization of rubber (1844), pneumatic tire (1845), shoe sewing machine (1846), rotary printing press (1846), Bessemer steel process (1847), turbine engine (1849), electric locomotive (1851) and others.

Since the Eighteenth Century, capitalist manufactures had emerged alongside the domestic system. This was generally seen in the textile industry in which the exploitation of poor children in such places was common since colonial times. Enterprises like the refining of iron or the manufacture of glass, which required too great an investment for the individual artisan, were always under capitalist control. In the United States, like in Great Britain, the growth of capitalist manufactures, with its division of production into a series of separate steps constituted of simple movements, made possible the introduction of Machines that would perform such steps.

The textile industry was the first to undergo the industrial revolution. The British government tried to secure a British monopoly on the new technology by prohibiting the exportation of machinery or plans, and the emigration of trained operatives. Nevertheless, US capitalists attracted skillful mechanics and smuggled machinery and plans in from England. By 1787, spinning Jennies were already in use in Massachusetts textile factories. In 1790, Samuel Slater, a British mechanic who had concealed his identity and slipped out of Great Britain, was able to reproduce the Arkwright machinery by memory and soon the first US spinning mill to employ water power began operations. The development of cotton textile industry proceeded continually. From 800,000 spindles, there were in operation in 1825, the figure rose to 5,200,000 in 1860, and the number of textile workers reached 122,000.

The industrial revolution largely depended upon iron production. Since colonial days, small iron industries were built in New England, but the birth of modern iron industry in the United States dates to the second decade of the Nineteenth Century. In 1817, new methods based upon puddling and rolling were introduced into western Pennsylvania. By 1833, coal began to be used for smelting iron, but it was not until the great expansion of railroads increased the demand for iron enormously that the new process was generalized. By the 1850's, great plants began to be built where coke furnaces, puddling furnaces, and rolls were brought together. In 1850, the annual output of iron had reached 600,000 tons, and by 1860, it rose to 988,000 tons.

Plants where objects made of iron and other metals were fabricated came into being. Machinery revolutionized the manufacture of small products and the heavy industry started its development. By the middle of the Nineteenth Century locomotives, steamboats, and several types of factory machinery were built in the United States.

At the beginning of the process of industrialization, the main source of energy was waterpower. Long after Watt had developed his steam engine, in 1769, many US industries continued depending on waterpower due to its lower cost. Nevertheless, the steam engine invaded the areas where there was not any important water supply. By the 1860's, steam power had become supreme in almost all industrial branches.

The importance of communication increased with each decade as economy became complicated by commercial agriculture, mechanical agriculture, and the consequent rise of home and foreign trade. Transoceanic and coastal trade clung to sailing vessels for a long period. By the late 1840's, the clipper ship was perfected sacrificing cargo space for speed. The clippers became famous in the long run, from New York

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around Cape Horn to San Francisco, in a voyage of about thirteen weeks only, a trip of particular importance after California was seized and news of gold discoveries there had spread. In 1855, railroad across the Isthmus of Panama was completed, which made the circumnavigation of South America unnecessary. The clipper finally came out of use with the successful introduction of the steamship.

In 1807, Robert Fulton first demonstrated the practicability of the steamboat in freight and passenger service when his boat, the *Clermont*, equipped with a Watt engine, ascended the Hudson from New York to Albany, a distance of 150 miles, in 32 hours. In 1838, the *Great Western*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic, made the distance from Bristol to New York in 15 days. In the 1840's, steamship companies began scheduled passages between Europe and the United States. By 1854, US merchant marine almost equaled that of Britain in tonnage, although it lost ground during the last years of the decade.

Due to its unusual geographical advantages, the port of New York benefited particularly from this commercial growth becoming the leading US port since 1807. This position was consolidated after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, which made New York an essential outlet for western products.

Between 1843 and 1860, while US foreign trade grew five and a half times. Domestic trade grew ten times. By 1860, the value of goods carried within the country amounted to about \$ 10 billion. To satisfy the needs of this rising home trade, there was a thorough revolution in the means of transport. In 1818, the National Road was completed. This highway greatly eased communications between the new trans-Appalachian states and the eastern seaboard. Although good roads speeded the mails and made stagecoach travel more comfortable, freighting for most western products was intolerably high—to transport a ton of goods from the Great Lakes to New York costs 100. Wherever possible, therefore, goods were moved by water. Every year heavily laden flatboats floated down the Ohio and the Mississippi to New Orleans. Floating downstream was not difficult, but a backbreaking labor was required to move boats in the opposite direction. It was in serving the upstream traffic that steamboats proved most useful. After Fulton's experiment, the use of steamboats for river navigation became generalized and a flat-bottomed type of steamboat, better adapted for western conditions, was developed. Mark Twain left a vivid picture of the colorful life of river steamboat era.

Since the 1790's, canals began to be built around the obstacles (falls, rapids, or shallows) which spoiled many eastern rivers for navigation. From 1817 to 1825, the famous Erie Canal was built. This canal connected the Hudson River—and thus, the port of New York—with Lake Erie, 363 miles away. Soon Erie Canal paid off its total cost of \$7,000,000 since it reduced freight rates between Buffalo and Albany from, \$100 to \$15, and the travel time from twenty to eight days. A dozen of small villages along the canal soon enjoyed a remarkable growth.

The success of Erie Canal stimulated a score of similar projects. Canal building continued in New York until most parts of the state were connected with the main Erie Canal-Hudson River artery. Under the fever of canal building, several other projects were completed in almost all Northern seaboard states, although none proved as successful as the Erie Canal.

During the Eighteenth Century, New York underwent a spectacular rise, and eventually became the leading commercial center of the nation. The port of New York was the best situated for coastal trade and it enjoyed a serviceable water route to western markets, by way of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, soon enlarged by Erie Canal. All these advantages combined to give New York the most favorable situation also as a warehousing are for transatlantic trade. New York merchants controlled also most of Southern trade. In 1830, it was estimated that 40 cents of every dollar paid for cotton went north—almost exclusively to New York—for freight tolls, insurance commissions, and interests.

The most important advance in transportation was the development of railroads. In 1829, the first locomotive the *Stonebridge Lion* was imported from Britain. In 1831, the first American-built locomotive, the *Best Friend of Charleston*, was tried out in South Carolina, and by 1833, it was in operation on a pioneer line of 136 miles. Many lines were constructed during the thirties, the railroad fever extending into the Middle West during the forties and fifties. By 1850, there were 9021 miles of railroad in the United States, and by 1869, the mileage reached 30,000.

The railroad soon surpassed all other means of transport and became the main carrier of passengers and freight. It connected the different regions of the country doing away with local self-sufficiency, making it

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easier for colonists to travel west, opening new outlets to eastern industrial products and to agricultural goods, and thus, giving a great impulse to the growth of the national market.

Railroad companies were intimately related with government from the start. In order to encourage railroad construction, state and local governments made grants of land and gave tax exemptions to corporations. In this way, the government began to subsidize the building of railroads with public funds for the benefit of the company owners.

The development of the railroad kept pace with that of the telegraph. Samuel F. B. Morse patented the first electric telegraph suitable for practical use in providing instantaneous communication over long distances. On May 24, 1844, the first experimental line started operation from Washington to Baltimore. Thereafter the electric network was extended with remarkable speed. In 1852, there were 230 000 miles of telegraph lines in the country. After a period of wild competition among rival telegraph companies, the tendency toward consolidation and monopoly became evident. By 1866, the Western Union Telegraph Company had gained dominance of the West, absorbed the American Telegraph Company, the leading unit in the East, and became the leading corporation of the day.

The development of industry, commerce, and transportation and the passing of rural self-sufficiency led to the rapid growth of cities. In 1790, only 3 per cent of American population lived in places of 8,000 inhabitants or more; in 1860, about 16 per cent did so. The process of urbanization took place in the North. The largest concentrations of population were at the Northern seaports and at the new industrial and commercial cities that emerged in the Northwest. Between 1790 and 1860 the population of New York grew from 33,000 to 1,091,000 (including Brooklyn), Philadelphia's population grew from 42,000 to 565,000. Baltimore and Boston also attained enormous growth.

Next in rank to these seaboard cities, some towns in the Northwest had already become leading urban centers by 1860: Cincinnati with 161,000 inhabitants, St. Louis with 160,000, Chicago with 109,000, Buffalo with 81,000, and Pittsburgh with 77,000.

The majority of the population of these cities lived in conditions of squalid poverty. Hundreds of thousands of persons lived in damp, dark, vermin-infected cellar rooms. There were frequent epidemics of yellow fever, typhoid fever, cholera, and other diseases. Since very early citizens faced the growing problem of crime. Robberies, assaults and murders soon became a common feature of the American cities. By the 1850's, New York was alleged to be the most crime-ridden city of the world with Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Cincinnati not far behind.

The industrial revolution led to the development of the modern working class in the United States. Foster writes that by the time the Civil War began there were 1,311,246 industrial workers in the country, of whom about 25 per cent were women.

The capitalists subjected the workers to a ruthless system of exploitation in unhealthy and dangerous factories and mines, for wages barely enough "to keep body and soul together". From 1791 to 1840, the growth of production was attained, mainly, by increasing the number of wageworkers and by extending the workday. Since 1840, this system of exploitation was supplemented by intensifying labor. Exhausting toil became a typical trait of the "American way of life".

The working class movement of the early years of the Nineteenth Century was marked by spontaneity and instability. Although the industrial upsurge led to the proletarianization of the working class, for a long time unskilled factory labor remained a small percentage of the active population and hence, wage labor consisted to a large extent of skilled workers in various crafts. The possibility to escape the hardship of capitalist exploitation in the factories by becoming small farmers in the lands taken from the Native Americans was a strong appeal to many wage earners, especially during the crises. This, and the influx of migration, served to slow down the rise of a hereditary.

This situation changed as western lands passed to the hands of private owners. By 1892, Engels wrote that the great safety valve against the formation of a permanent proletarian class had practically ceased to act, and that a class of life-long and even hereditary proletarians existed at that hour in the United States.

The transformation of the handicraftsmen into wageworkers, because of the growth of industry was deeply resented by the former artisans. They soon began to recognize certain interests peculiar to their new

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status, to build trade unions, and to fight. Early struggles were usually fought by temporary combinations of workers. Until the 1820's, permanent organizations were generally unsuccessful.

During the years 1825-37, there was a sudden rising of unionism. The rapid economic growth of the nation in these years was accompanied by increasing exploitation of the working class and the rise of trade unions. Labor organizations emerged in almost all branches of industry. In 1834, two thirds of the mechanics of New York were said to belong to trade unions.

The working class actively participated in the people's struggles of the period, as the fight of the small farmers in defense of the democratic fights gained by the masses in the Revolution. But the wageworkers also conducted many independent class activities of their own. There were numerous strikes against the prevalent starvation wages and extremely long working hours. Trade unions were organized among textile workers, construction workers, tailors, printers, etc., not only in the eastern cities, but also in western centers like Louisville, Cincinnati, and St Louis. In 1833 a General Trades Union, which federated various craft unions of New York City, was organized, and similar central labor organizations were formed in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other cities. Numerous labor papers were started. The Mechanic's Free Press published in Philadelphia from 1828 to 1831 is considered the first trade union journal in the world.

The rapid growth of industry, the improvement of communications, and the development of the national market originated the formation of solid local unions, with central bodies, and national unions. In 1834, the central labor unions of six cities sent delegates to New York and the National Trades Union was formed. It fought for the ten-hour work day, universal education, sale of public land only to actual settlers, child labor laws, and repeal of the laws under which trade unions were being prosecuted as illegal combinations. Between 1835 and 1836, at least five crafts —the shoemakers, printers, carpenters, and handloom weavers —, held national conventions.

The young and vigorous working class movement carried out many successful strikes raising wages and gaining the basic ten-hour workday demand in many places. The workers also fought with increasing resolution for limitation of child labor for safety provisions for working places, for universal manhood suffrage, for a public school system, for free homesteads, and for many other pressing demands.

The rise of unions and their increasingly powerful struggle greatly alarmed factory owners. Associations to combat the workers' demands were formed by employers and the state machine was brutally employed for the same end. Striking workers were discharged and Blacklisted. Union members and leaders were persecuted for "criminal conspiracy". Against hostile court decisions, the workers established the right to organize and strike by militantly practicing that right.

Recurring economic crises had devastating effects on trade unionism. In 1836, there were about 300,000 trade unionists in the United States. But the severe and prolonged crisis of 1837 seriously checked the rising young labor movement. With the industries paralyzed and tens of thousands of workers unemployed, most of labor's gains were swept away. Lost in the debacle were the National Trades Union, the national associations of the crafts, the city central organizations, and even most of the local unions. During the forties and the fifties trade unionism recovered and made further advances in the midst of rapid industrial development and the extension of railroads. This growth was intermittently interrupted by cyclical economic crisis, like before.

As local and national trade unions were organized, labor journalism revived —the Voice of Industry was the most influential labor paper of the period— and the struggle for the ten hour workday and higher wages was started again. The demand for state laws limiting the working day became an important issue for many trade unions. Under popular pressure, the legislatures of New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maine, Ohio, and Rhode Island, enacted laws making ten hours a legal day's work "in the absence of special contract". The industrial corporations promptly prepared special contracts in which their employers gave their assent to the old hours. Those who refused to sign were discharged and blacklisted. In Pittsburgh, after having their textile mills closed for six weeks, the employers had to accept the ten-hour day, although the workers were compelled to take a 16 per cent reduction in wages. By 1860, the ten-hour day had been won in many industries.

The discovery of gold in California in 1849 brought about a depreciation of the dollar and a general fall in the living standards of the working class, which impelled the workers to struggle for better wages. Like their prototype of the thirties, the unions of the fifties proved fragile. The capitalists, backed by the state

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machinery, offered a strong resistance to the movement, and the large-scale migration of the period strengthened their hands. Many trade unions were wined by the short depression of 1854; more went under during the serious collapse of 1857. The workers had yet to learn how to hold their unions-together during economic crisis. But during the Civil War the trade unions quickly recovered and reached new heights of development.

By the early 1850's Marxism began to be propagated in the US labor movement. The ideas of scientific revolutionary socialism were first introduced by German immigrants, mostly workers who were adherent of the concepts, which had been set forth in the Communist Manifesto (1848). Outstanding among the German Marxist cadres were Joseph Weydemeyer and Friederich Sorge. Weydemeyer organized The German-American socialists of New York, and, in 1852, he founded the Proletarian League and started the distribution of Marx's writings in German. After some years, Weydemeyer moved to the Chicago-Milwaukee area to organize working class struggle there, while Sorge substituted him in the leadership of the eastern socialist movement.

Marxism played an important role in US labor movement, raising it to a much higher ideological and political plane. As Foster points out, Marxism provided US workers with et scientific understanding of the course of the country's economic and political development, it explained the significance of class struggle, it clarified the question of the recurring economic crisis, it laid out a clear cut program of combined trade union and political struggle, and it gave the workers a definite perspective of a socialist society, based on the rule of the working class and its allies.

A relevant problem faced by US workers in the 1850's was the question of slavery. Although the antislavery sentiment was always strong among the workers, factors retarded the entrance of many workers into the abolitionist movement. On the one hand, the process of proletarianization was in its early stages, working class consciousness was relatively underdeveloped, trade unions were weak, and because of these circumstances, US workers lacked a class program that definitely identified their interests with those of the Blacks. On the other hand, it was widely believed within the young working class movement of the period that if the slaves were manumitted the release of cheap labor would ruin the wages of the workers. US Communists realized that the emancipation of the slaves was an indispensable step in the process of freeing all the workers, since, as Marx said, "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black it is branded". By 1860, US workers had become a basic power in the revolutionary antislavery alliance of the Republican Party.

4. American Bourgeoisie Revolution (1850- 1900).

4.1 The Civil War. Causes and consequences. Reconstruction period.

Sources of the Conflict

From 1861 on the United States underwent a bloody and devastating Civil War. The fundamental cause of this conflict was the historical need for the US capitalism, at its industrial stage, to do away with the archaic and wasteful slave labor system to attain full control of the national market and government. Although the Revolution of 1775-1783 was unable to destroy the outrageous slave institution, the abolition of chattel slavery in the Northwest Territories set into motion currents that in the end, were to abolish it outright.

Slavery in the United States was related to capitalist development. There were close links between Northern capitalists and Southern planters, both feeding on the inhuman exploitation of the chattels. Northern interests related to slave and cotton trade made possible the compromise that safeguarded the "peculiar" institution throughout the revolutionary period and in the decades that followed.

During the first half of the Nineteenth Century the swift expansion of the decadent slave system in the South and the even more rapid industrialization of the North led to the growth and development of the contradictions between the two socioeconomic systems.

L. Huberman points out that the United States was true only in name since North and South

...worked differently, thought differently, lived different (...) The two sections, so unlike in their whole manner of living were sure to split The Northern merchant, manufacturer and banker classes rising to new power with the industrial revolution, had to come to grips with the Southern landholding classes.

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The conflict between Northern capitalists and Southern planters took shape around specific economic and political issues, the kernel of which was slavery. Slavery was what stood behind all the noticeable points of friction, and slavery was the chief support of the planters' power; the inhuman institution had to be removed so that the power of the slaveholding aristocracy would be broken and an industrial society could develop in the USA. Abraham Lincoln realized that slavery was a crucial issue. He said, "One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute."

A basic antagonism between the slave-owning planters and the rising Northern-industrialists was the need of the latter to attain full control of the national market. The enormous growth of cotton production had taken place in direct connection with the expansion of the British textile industry. Most of the cotton production was exported to the British industrialists—an 80 percent of the 1859 crop, for example—and an important part of the manufactures consumed in the South came from British industries. In this way, the Northern bourgeoisie was partially excluded from the exploitation, of the Southern market by means of the export of commodities and by means of capital investments into that region.

The question of the tariff a motive for prolonged and increasingly bitter struggle between North and South was also related to the contradictory interests of both sections regarding the control and regulation of the national market. The Northern bourgeoisie, in an effort to safeguard for themselves the home market and to defend their growing industries from foreign competition, defended a policy of protectionism with increasing resolution. In this issue, the industrialists found the support of most of the Northern workers and farmers. Here they demanded that every state should be compelled by the Federal government to return all runaway slaves to their masters.

The anti-slavery forces defended the Federal government's right to determine whether a newly formed state should enter the Union as a free or as a slave state. After a long and bitter, controversy in which the slave system was violently attacked and violently defended on the economic and moral grounds, the two sides arranged for a compromise. This was the logical end of the conflict, since neither the Northern nor the Southern interests were yet already for an open break.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 was the work of Senator Henry Clay of, Kentucky, a politician representative of conciliatory positions. The compromise provided for the admission of Missouri as a slave state and Maine—up to then part of Massachusetts—as a free state thus maintaining the equality of power in the Senate. Slavery should be forever prohibited in the rest of Louisiana Purchase. It was stated, nevertheless, that escaped slaves should be returned to their masters in the South.

The Missouri Compromise was essentially a large concession to the aggressive Southern planters whose system had to expand or die. They received a great amount of land from a region, which had been generally held as free. But the compromise did not settle the question. It only stimulated the insatiable greed of the slaveholders for land. Jefferson clearly saw that the compromise was not the solution to the conflict. He wrote, "It is hushed, indeed for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence".

During the following three decades, the bitter struggle over slavery mounted steadily. The next major collision took place over the admission of the huge land spoils of the conflict with Mexico. Even before the war with Mexico concluded, the slaveholders began to make plans for the introduction of slavery into the new territories, which might be carved out of the great land grab.

By the end of the 1840's the balance between slave states and free states was evenly maintained, each having fifteen. The struggle formally started with the conflict around the famous Wilmot Proviso. This was a bill introduced in the House of Representatives by David Wilmot of Pennsylvania. The Wilmot Proviso was an amendment to the effect that "no territory which might be acquired by treaty from Mexico should ever be a slaveholding country". The amendment conditioned a bill from President Polk asking Congress for an appropriation of \$2,000,000 to "pay" Mexico for the lands about to be taken. The Wilmot Proviso was twice passed by the House but it was always defeated in the Senate.

The defeat of the Wilmot Proviso was the beginning of one of the greatest debates on slavery of US history. The aggressive slaveholders demanded free way to the expansion of slavery in all fronts, the tightening of the Fugitive Slave Law, which required the return of escaped slaves from the Northern states and that a stop be put to all Northern agitation in favor of the abolition of slavery. They openly threatened to

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secede from the Union if their demands were not taken into account. The representatives of the anti-slavery forces strongly rejected these aggressive demands.

The Compromise of 1850

In the midst of the crisis created by the mounting collision of the contending forces, Senator Henry Clay came again with another compromise proposal. In this move, Clay represented the interests of Northern merchants and bankers linked to the Southern planters. After bitter debate in Congress, Clay's resolutions were passed. Then they were turned into bills and passed as laws. The aggregate is known in history as the Compromise of 1850.

The 1850 Compromise was another concession to the slaveholders. It stated that in most of the lands taken from Mexico, and still to be organized into territories (Utah and New Mexico) the decision on slavery was to be made by the states themselves. This opened this vast area (which had been free under Mexico) to colonization by the slaveholders, and violated the Compromise of 1820 which had set the 360° 30' limit as the Northern boundary to the expansion of the slave system. The admission of California as a free state was supposed to conciliate Northern interests, but this was not any concession from the slaveholders since this territory was family in the hands of the antislavery forces. Another conciliatory measure was the abolition of slave trade within the District of Columbia. The abolitionists had demanded the abrogation of the infamous institution in the capital of the nation for a long time, but it was not achieved until the Civil War.

One of the great victories of the slaveholders in the Compromise of 1850 was the passage of a new Fugitive Slave Act. This Law, specially designed to destroy the Underground Railroad, gave special powers to Federal officials for the capture of fugitive slaves, provided heavy fines and jail sentences for all those who in any way opposed or hindered the application of that legislation, and deprived the slaves of the rights of a regular trial. This was, in fact, an attempt to extend the Southern slave codes to the North and an invitation to slave hunters to kidnap free Blacks in the North to sell them in the South. This barbarous law was strongly resisted, often with violence throughout the North. Northern people could see before their very eyes the realities of the slave system and its cruelties, which contributed greatly to the growth of antislavery sentiments among them.

The Compromise of 1850, which showed the aggressive expansionism of the planters, as well as the confusion and indecision of the Northern antislavery forces, did not solve the conflict around slavery. On the contrary, it only stimulated the aggressiveness of the slaveholders and, hence, aggravated the contradictions that were leading the nation to the Civil War.

The Pre-War Decade the Emergence of the Republican Party

Since the Revolution of 1776, slavery was a central issue of US politics, although many people failed to realize this. During the first half of the Nineteenth Century, this question came increasingly to the fore in the midst of swift industrial development, the expansion of the plantation system and the mounting conflicts between the pro-slavery forces and their opponents, which eventually led to the great Civil War. The contradiction centered on slavery took form in the organization of the contending groups into political parties which (might with increasing resolution for the control of the state and the federal governments.

During most of this period, the slaveholders were able to keep an almost undisputed sway over the Presidency, the Supreme Court, and the Congress. This was due to the basic reasons, in the main: the planters were always able to offer a solid united block to their opponents, gathering their forces and their most important allies around the clear cut aim of preserving and extending the institution of slavery; the Democratic Party, the fundamental stronghold of the slaveholders, managed to gain broad support among the Northern workers and western frontiersmen and farmers, who saw in the rapacious Northern capitalists their most dangerous enemies; finally, the slaveholders based their power, also, in their alliance with Northern capitalists and merchants directly concerned with the commercialization of Southern staples.

Another factor that favored the prolonged supremacy of the slavocracy was the disunion and confusion prevailing among the antislavery forces, and the fact that the industrialists, those who were entrusted with the historical role to lead the struggle against slavery, usually tended to a policy, of conciliation with the slave-owners. Afraid of a revolution, these elements generally offered a mild opposition to the aggressive slaveholders, and tried to put boundaries to the expanding slave system by means of compromises that constituted concessions to the planters and only served to stimulate their appetite for fresh lands.

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During the 1850's the contending groupings reached their political maturity. The increasingly sharper conflicts over the issue of slavery and the mounting tide of the struggle of the slaves provoked a radical realignment of classes that led to the formation of the two hostile combinations that were to clash in the Civil War under the banners of the Democratic and the Republican parties.

One of these alliances was formed by the big Southern slaveholders and their Northern allies; bankers, merchants, and shippers linked to the Southern planters through trade and the financing and shipping of the rising cotton crop, then the largest part of all US exports. Together with them were also the New England cotton manufacturers who depended on the South for raw material. The leading bankers and merchants had developed close social, political, and economic relationships with the Southern planters marrying into their families and investing into their plantations. The stronghold of these pro-slavery interests of the North, known as "Copperhead" traitors during the Civil War, was New York City. Aptheker writes that,

...the rice sugar cotton, tobacco, made up the blood and bones of the business of the merchant capitalists, of the North; they too, rested finally upon the broad Black backs of the slaves and so they allied themselves with the Blacks' immediate exploiters... And if this were not enough, the slaveholders did not fail to appreciate, and to point out to their Northern class brothers, that the philosophy of abolitionism, its equalitarianism, its progressivism, and, above all its attack upon the sanctity of private property, represented an ultimate threat to the interests of all exploiters.

Since the early 1850's all the antislavery forces of the nation entered into and increasingly rapid process of amalgamation and organization which led to the foundation of the Republican Party in 1855 and to the eventual triumph of the candidate for the political coalition, six years later. During the same period, the traditional parties, dominated by the planters or their allies, underwent a gradual disintegration, many of their followers going to the ranks of the Republicans.

In 1840, James G. Birney, a planter who had freed his slaves, founded the Liberty Party. Made up of white and Black abolitionists, the Liberty Party was the first organization to carry the emancipation question clearly into the political field. In a political atmosphere completely controlled by the traditional parties, the Liberty Party was unable to poll a large vote. Most of its membership merged into the Free Soil Party.

The Free Soil Party was founded at Buffalo in August 1848 by Abolitionists from the Liberty Party and Free-Soilers from the traditional Whig and Democratic parties. The new party's platform opposed the extension of slavery in the territories and called for free lands to actual settlers. Its watchword was "Free soil, free speech, free labor and free men". In spite of its limited aim—to contain the expansion of the slave system—the Free-Soil Party was antislavery and was the predecessor of the great Republican Party.

By 1850, there were two major political parties: the traditional proslavery Democratic Party, dominated by the big Southern slaveholders and their Northern allies, and the Whig Party, controlled by Northern capitalist interests in alliance with slaveholders of the South. The Whig Party developed a policy of collaboration with the planters, favoring the proslavery compromises of 1820 and 1850.

The Whig Party could not survive its defeat in the 1850 elections. This party, split by dissension over the issue of slavery, gave birth to a number of political factions that expired in a year or two. The disruption of the Whig Party gave rise to the American or the so-called Know-Nothing Party. Originated in the early 1840's, this chauvinistic organization stood in violent opposition to the increasing flood of immigrants. It was also anti-Catholic and anti-Black. Since secret regulations required its members to pretend they "know nothing" when they were pressed for information about their organization, they were known as Know Nothings".

Although the Know Nothing Party grew rapidly out of the disintegration of the Whig Party, it soon split over the question of slavery and by the 1856 elections, it was in frank decline. The sad role played by the Know Nothings was to sabotage the growth of a truly revolutionary organization out of the disintegration of the Whig Party.

Both the Whig and the Know Nothing parties proved to be too reactionary to organize an effective antislavery fight, given the then revolutionary aims of the industrialists. A new party was needed and it began to grow spontaneously all over the country since 1854. The new organization, called the Republican Party, rose very rapidly, mainly in the North and the West receiving the support of prominent newspapers and political leaders.

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From the very beginning, the political platform of the Republican Party was essentially “free-soil”. It demanded the exclusion of slavery from the territories, a high tariff and a program of national internal developments, chiefly the construction of a transcontinental railroad along a central route. However, it did not attack the institution of slavery directly.

The foundation of the Republican Party was, nevertheless, a great step forward since it organized in a broad coalition all the antislavery forces of the nation. Those who had opposed slavery within the ranks of the Whigs, the Democrats, and the Know Nothings, as well as Free Soilers and Abolitionists joined in the new party.

In the 1856 elections, the Republican candidate won more than 1,344,264 votes, against 1,838,169 won by the Democratic candidate, sweeping several Northern states. This major victory established the newly born organization upon firm bases.

The Republican Party had a complex class composition. It was headed by the Northern and western industrialists who soon realized that the new party was their main political weapon in the struggle against the Southern planters. The industrial capitalists constituted a hesitating and dubious leadership for the national anti-slavery movement. Their general policy was to “contain” the expansion of slavery. Only under the most pressing circumstances, they turned to attack the inhuman institution. In spite of their increasingly bitter conflicts with the slaveholders, many industrialists always felt fraternal toward their fellow exploiters of the South. Besides, a revolution that might arouse the masses was always alarming to them.

The Blacks, both free and slave gave full support to the Republican Party after some hesitation due to the free-soil program of the new organization. Frederick Douglass, the outstanding Black leader, inaugurated this anti-sectarian line in 1856 by dropping his candidacy for the small Liberty Party and declaring his support to the Republican candidate. F. Douglass was highly critical to the limited free-soil aims of the Republican platform, but he did realize that if Whigs and Democrats had been transformed into Republicans, the latter might be eventually turned into abolitionists.

The Republican Party found wide support among Northern manufacturers, shopkeepers, professionals, etc., who made up the Northern city middle class. These groups were in sharp conflict with the Southern slaveholders over the tariff internal improvements, and the status of the territories, issues that were the basic principles of the Republican platform. With the exception of Garrison and his still numerous adherents, who followed a sectarian line, the abolitionists joined in the new party.

The western farmers constituted a basic pillar of the Republican Party. The fundamental conflict between the farmers and the planters was over the colonization of Western lands. In their long struggle for free homesteads in the West, the farmers had always found the bitter opposition of the planters who tried to grab all they could for their plantations. Free, soil bills had always been rejected by governments controlled by the planters, and the farmers had to fight arms in hand for the preservation of slavery out of the territories, as they did in Kansas.

The farmers also favored a policy of internal improvements. Roads, canals, railroads, and good harbors, would help them dispose of their products in eastern and European markets. The development of those means of communication in the preceding years (chiefly the building of the Erie Canal system and the construction of railroads) had opened new safer ways to the West-East trade forging new links between the farmers and the Northeast. This broke the trading contacts existing -between Northern and Western farmers with the South via the Ohio, Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

The majority of the working class gave their backing to the antislavery movement and constituted a fundamental power in the revolutionary alliance of the Republican Party. And this was so in spite of the prevailing racist ideology and the powerful propaganda, carried out by the planters agents about the flooding of the labor market, which, was supposed to take place as a result of the manumission of slaves, and the subsequent fall of wages.

The planters' attempt to strengthen their control of the federal government and to extend their autocratic and reactionary power over all the institutions of the national life was contrary to the workers' fight for democracy, education, and better living standards. The expanding slave system and the opposition of the planters to a high tariff retarded the growth of industry and the development of the working class. Accordingly, most of the independent trade unions' took a firm stand against slavery, usually condemning

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both chattel and wage slavery on an equal footing. The workers also participated in the struggle for land reform in the hope to gain free homesteads for themselves in the West. The planters were, of course, a basic obstacle in this aspiration.

Many workers, nevertheless, hesitated a long time before joining up with the Republican Party. It was difficult for them to understand their basic need to form a united front with the industrialists, their traditional class enemies, to fight against the reactionary attack of the slaveholders. A good deal of the necessary educational work to persuade the workers of this fundamental need was necessary.

The Struggle of Ideas

Apart from the valuable antislavery agitation carried out by the abolitionist societies through their newspapers, lectures, the organization of masses, demonstration, etc. —a work hardly to be overestimated—, three events had a particularly great significance in stirring the masses to action; they were the publication of two antislavery books, Uncle Tom's Cabin and The Impending Crisis, and the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

In 1852 appeared the great antislavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe that has been regarded as “The lighted torch that fired the conflagration, of the Civil War”. Mrs. Stowe had taught school for several years in Cincinnati, just across the Ohio River from the slave state of Kentucky and had taken active part in the Underground Railroad movement. Based on her first hand knowledge of slavery, she wrote her famous book in which she depicted the tragic life of the Black slaves. Published in a moment of increasing national controversy over the question of slavery, the sales of the book reached millions of copies and it was quickly translated into tens of languages. Thousands of people knew the story in its dramatized version. The book had an enormous national and international repercussion. Its publication had a great effect in stirring up the antislavery feelings of the people. To try to offset the tremendous blow inflicted to slavery by the book, Southern Whites began to produce scores of books, articles, and poems justifying slavery. Mrs. Stowe, in spite of her bright criticism of slavery, opposed violence to resist enslavement, and saw the solution to the evils of the institution in an eventual return of the Blacks to Africa.

In 1857, Hinton Rowan Helper published his book The Impending Crisis; in which he attacked slavery from the economic point of view. He wrote that the slave system only benefited “the lords of the lash”, a few big slaveholders, while the vast mass of non-slaving whites of the South lived in poverty, ignorance, and superstition. He showed that the South lagged far behind the North economically and culturally, and pointed at slavery as the basic reason for that disastrous disparity. Helper proposes the gradual abolition of slavery with the indemnification of the slaveholders for the loss of their property, the shipment of the manumitted slaves to Africa, and their colonization there. The book was a great success. More than three million copies were sold and many thousands were introduced into the South.

4.2 Abraham Lincoln

An important event of the national controversy over the issue of slavery was the series of debates by Lincoln and Douglas in 1858. Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was the son of a carpenter from the Illinois frontier region. A farmer in his youth, he taught himself law and managed to become a lawyer. He served in the Illinois Legislature several times and from 1847 to 1849 in the House of Representatives of the United States. Abraham Lincoln was one of the many Whigs who joined the Republican Party. He was nominated for vice-president for the elections of 1856.

In 1858, Lincoln was chosen by the Republicans as their candidate for US Senator for Illinois. He challenged Stephen A. Douglas, the Democratic candidate, to a series of seven debates, held in various parts of the state, which attracted national attention since they went beyond local issues and touched on questions affecting all the citizen, chiefly that of slavery, thus setting the stage for the crucial presidential election of 1860.

In the speech in which Lincoln accepted the senatorial nomination, he observed that the slavery crisis had grown worse each year and declared that eventually slavery would have to be eliminated. “A house divided against itself cannot stand”, he quoted the Bible. In the debates Lincoln cleared out that, the real issue of the controversy was the position of the two parties toward slavery; while the Democrats favored the institution, the Republicans saw it as a wrong. Although Lincoln assured that he did not advocate political and social equality for the Blacks, he said that the Declaration's statement “all men are created equal” included the Black men. S. Douglas, in this respect, made a defense of “white supremacy” and backed slavery by failing to attack it.

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Regarding the powers of the Federal government over slavery, Lincoln took the traditional Free-Soil position. He asserted that the government had the constitutional right to legislate against slavery, hence, the Dred Scott decision should be reversed and slavery should be prohibited in the territories. He, nevertheless, insisted that his party did not propose to interfere with slavery where it already existed and that he favored the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act after it had been amended.

S. Douglas antagonized Lincoln's opposition to the further extension of slavery with the theory of popular (squatter) sovereignty, according to which the people of a territory had the right to vote if slave or free. This "democratic" theory had served to justify the introduction of slavery into Utah and New Mexico and had backed the attempts to extend the infamous institution into the other territories. Then Lincoln destroyed S. Douglas' scheme by pointing out that slavery had been legalized throughout the nation by the Supreme Court's decision over the Dred Scott Case, hence any local legislation to outlaw or to establish slavery would be unconstitutional. Here S. Douglas was placed in a situation involving choice between two equally unsatisfactory alternatives. S. Douglas chose to support the "popular sovereignty" theory, thus rejecting the Dred Scott decision and losing wide support from the ranks of his party for his nomination for the Presidency in the coming elections.

S. Douglas was elected Senator by the Illinois State Legislature, but Lincoln was the actual winner. The prominence that the debates gave Lincoln made him a leading candidate for the nomination for the Presidency in the next Republican national convention.

The War between the North and the South

The election of Abraham Lincoln as the sixteenth President of the United States was the signal for the Southern planters to initiate a general movement of secession from the Union. It has been said that it was a move aimed at avoiding a disastrous war with the North. According to this, the citizens of the Southern states wanted to part from the Union to found an independent republic that would then organize its relations with the North and with the rest of the world as they saw fit. But this was not so. The secessionist movement was a revolt of the planters against the Federal government, and the aims of the slaveholders were to take control of the state machine by force of arms and re-establish slavery everywhere. The Southern oligarchy reasoned that if the Union did not serve as their instrument for the execution of their slave policy, it was better for them to make the break then. They considered that the rapid development of the Northwest and the Republican Party would soon create more unfavorable conditions for the South; the election of Lincoln was the pretext.

The planters openly proclaimed their plan: "We will expand over Mexico, over the isles of the seas, over the far-off Southern tropics, until we establish a confederation of republics the greatest, the freest, the most powerful the world has ever seen". They also planned to make slaves of the wageworkers of the North.

Marx and Engels followed the events from Europe. They wrote,

...with a peaceful cession of the contested territory to the Southern Confederacy the North would surrender to the slave republic more than three-quarters of the entire territory of the United States... Thus there would in fact take place not a dissolution of the Union, but a reorganization of it, a reorganization on the basis of slavery under the recognized control of the slave-holding oligarchy.

Only four days after the election of Lincoln, the secessionist movement began in the Southern states. The official state machine started to work to arouse the people in favor of secession. Newspapers published ringing articles, the masses were told that they were beginning a people's revolution against the "...outrageous usurpation of power and aggressions upon rights committed by the Federal Government". Liberty poles were set up and the Marseillaise was sung in the streets. South Carolina took the initiative. At a conference of state leaders in October 1860, it had been decided to secede in case Lincoln was elected. Immediately after the election a convention was called. On December 20 the Convention passed an ordinance in the following words: "We, the people of the state of South Carolina, in convention assembled do declare and ordain that the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other states, under the name of the United States of America, is hereby dissolved."

Most of the other Southern states followed South Carolina. By early February 1861, six other states of the Deep South (Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas) had seceded. On February 4, delegates from six seceding states met at Montgomery, Alabama where they formed a new government, drew up a provisional constitution—an almost exact copy of the US Constitution except that it prohibited the

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protective tariff and internal improvement appropriations, and legalized slavery throughout the country— and called themselves the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis, a rich planter, was elected President.

The mutinous planters acted in a haste to confront Lincoln, whose administration was to be inaugurated on February 4, with an accomplished fact. Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas seceded after the war had begun. The Border States of Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri, where slavery was not so important economically, remained loyal to the Union.

There was powerful resistance throughout the South to the secessionist plot of the revolting planters. Left to the masses of the South, the secession would never have been accomplished. The planters forced the withdrawal by terrorism and by state conventions made up fraudulently to secure a favorable vote. Even though, they found great opposition from the delegates of small farmers and poor whites. Handpicked conventions throughout the South voted for secession, usually by a slight majority. Or were coerced to do so. The Border States, in spite of strong pressures, never seceded, and in Virginia a people's uprising severed the western part of this state that remained loyal to the Union under the name of West Virginia. During the Civil War, tens of thousands of Southern whites volunteered for and fought with the Union armies.

President James Buchanan, who was still serving the closing months of his administration when the secession took place, did nothing effective to prevent it. And neither did Congress, dominated by a pro-slavery majority. This treasonous attitude permitted the Southerners to occupy federal forts, post offices, and customhouses throughout the South—with the exception of Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, and three other forts off the coast of Florida—as well as to force the core of the Federal Army, in Texas to surrender.

Secession found full support among the pro-slavery interests of the North. As the antislavery forces of the North were split and confused, various schemes for a compromise gained ground and were tried out. These compromise proposals, directed to avert the war, only aided the slaveholders by sowing confusion and hesitation throughout the North. The planters were quickly building their Confederate Army. They were not interested on proposals of peace. They had already decided on war.

As a cover up of their plans, the planters and their supporters claimed that they were, carrying out a revolution, which had a strong appeal among the masses. Their opponents rejected this demagogical argument and denounced secessions as counterrevolutionary. There was indeed a revolution brewing in 1841—Foster writes— but it did not come from the Southern planters, it came from the Northern industrialists and their Black, farmers, worker, and middle class allies. Its spear point was directed against the rule of the planters and their system of chattel-slavery. The first stage of this developing revolution was the election of Abraham Lincoln, and the revolution was fated soon to go into its second phase—military action against the Planters' confederacy.

President Abraham Lincoln took his oath of office on March 4, 1861. In his inaugural address, he tried to placate the South, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so..." He declared also that the Fugitive Slave Law should be executed and that "No state upon its mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void..." and that the laws of the Union were to be executed in all the states although "... there needs to be no bloodshed or violence and there shall be none unless it be forced upon the national authority".

The Free- Soil and Abolitionist forces of the North rejected Lincoln's conciliatory policy and demanded energetic action against the mutinous planters. F. Douglas specially condemned Lincoln's denial of all feelings against slavery in such a time and in such circumstances.

The Southern fire-eaters violently rejected Lincoln's speech. They said it was a virtual declaration of war, that the South was an independent nation and that they would resist by force of arms any attempt of the Federal army to operate in the seceded states.

When Lincoln was inaugurated, the garrison at Fort Sumter was starving and he found himself in a serious dilemma. If he allowed the fort's garrison to surrender, he would surely lose much support from the ranks of his party. If he tried to reinforce Fort Sumter, it would have appeared as a provocation to the South. So, he tried to provision Fort Sumter peacefully and notified of this decision to the authorities of South Carolina. The Confederate authorities waited no longer. Major Anderson, the official in charge of Fort

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Sumter; was requested to surrender, and when he refused, the Confederate battery began to bombard the fort. It was April 4, 1862. After thirty-four hours of shelling, Anderson surrendered. The Civil War had begun.

Marx pointed out that “while the North, after long hesitations, finally drew the sword, not for crushing slavery —they took great pains to protest against such idea—...but for saving the Union, the South, on its part inaugurated the war by loudly proclaiming ‘the peculiar institution’ as the only and main aim of the rebellion. It confessed to fight for the liberty of enslaving other people, a liberty which despite the Northern protest, it asserted to be put in danger by the victory of the Republican Party and the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidential chair”.

The First Phase of the War: From April 4, 1861 to January 1, 1863

The Southern attack against Fort Sumter started the great Civil War. In an attempt to maintain chattel slavery and to establish their rule over the whole nation, the slaveholders imposed the people a bloody and devastating war that dragged over four years closing only when the South lay in utter exhaustion.

In 1860, the Union of the North possessed a vast superiority over the Confederacy of the South in almost every respect. The 23 states of the Union embraced about three fourths of the Nation’s territory and numbered nearly 23,000,000 people, as against 11 Confederate states with 9,000,000 inhabitants, including about 4,000,000 Black slaves. During the war the Confederacy could raise an army that has been estimated at about 1,300,000 Men as against an estimated 2,900,000 put in uniform by the North.

In economic resources, the Union also enjoyed a tremendous advantage. Nevins and Commager write that, “the North held a tremendous advantage in its industrial development, for New York alone produced in 1860 a value of manufactured goods more than twice; and Pennsylvania nearly twice; that of the whole Confederacy.”

The North had most of the nation’s skilled workers, an 81 per cent of its factories, and a 74 per cent of its bank deposits while the South owed the North about \$400,000,000 at the beginning of the war. The North also operated most of the mineral deposits and the railroad tracks of the country, and greatly surpassed the South in the production of grain, pork, beef, horses, and mules.

The greatest disadvantage of the Confederacy resulted from the obsolete methods of production then prevailing though the South chiefly its use of slave labor. And it was precisely to preserve and extend the wasteful, ruinous, and inhuman system of chattel slavery that the Confederates fought.

In delivering the attack against the Federal government, the arrogant planters were aware of the superiority of the North. But they based their aggressive plans on the “indispensability of cotton”. The South controlled the world’s main cotton supply, and the British manufacturers took most of that cotton for their mills. The Southern leaders believed that if that cotton supply was cut off within three months Great Britain would recognize the Confederacy, smash the blockade and fight the Union, if necessary, to obtain cotton. They also assumed that the North, pressed by the need for cotton, would seek peace on the South’s own terms within six months. This was, of course, an inflated notion. Neither the North collapsed for want of cotton fiber, nor did Great Britain enter the war.

The British ruling classes openly collaborated with the South. They built warships for the Confederates and provided the planters with loans to finance the war. The British capitalists sought the destruction of the dangerous commercial rival rapidly rising in the North and the perpetuation of the colonial-like dependence of the South to their interests. Great Britain was prevented from entering into the war by some significant factors. If Southern cotton was important for British interests, so was Northern wheat. The British capitalists found it highly profitable to assume a position of pretended neutrality and trade with the contending sides. The British government also found the opposition of broad sectors of the population with strong antislavery feelings. In this respect, the resistance of the British working class was of great importance. Marx and Engels played an important role in explaining to the workers the nature of the Civil War.

The Confederacy had some advantages over the North. There were in the South large numbers of adventurous idlers who had been drilled by the constant predatory expeditions against the neighboring countries. Living upon the depredation of a people in chains and under the constant threat of slave insurrections, the Southerners had a better military training when the war began. Since most of the fighting took place in the South, they were more familiar with the battlegrounds of the war than the Northerners were,

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and they did not have to expend their limited manpower on garrisoning captured cities, holding conquered territory, or transporting supplies over vast distances.

Like the South, the North believed that the war would be relatively short. The Unionists hoped that their better-equipped soldiers could quickly force the South to surrender. But the South, with its industry and agriculture largely prostrated not only withstood the bigger and better equipped armies of the North for years, but also inflicted them serious defeats which threatened the very existence of the Union. In this way the US people had to pay a heavy toll in lives and properties for the eradication of slavery.

The fundamental reason why the war lasted four dreadful years is to be found in the hesitating policy of the ruling classes of the North toward the conflict. They were divided into several groups. There were decided abolitionists; there were free-soilers, who wanted to “contain” slavery within certain boundaries; there were pro-slavery elements that openly collaborated with the slaveholders. Foster writes that the Northern capitalist class, confused and divided over its objectives and under the attack of the slavocracy, did not understand either the revolutionary nature of the situation or what to do about it.

The slave-owners on the other hand were unified around a clear-cut goal: full control of the national government for the perpetuation and expansion of the slave system.

Lincoln's Policy

The policy carried out by Lincoln and his administration reflected the weakness and confusions of the Northern bourgeoisie, whom they represented. To defeat the slavocracy and develop the Revolution, the Northern bourgeoisie needed to carry out a vigorous war against the South. It was also necessary to build a reliable administration and an efficient body of military officers, to free and arm the slaves, and to suppress the treacherous anti-war and pro-slavery forces existing in the North.

But Lincoln's government in its early period, neither understood the revolutionary situation that was developing nor realized what the tasks of the presidency were in that historical moment. The policy followed by Lincoln for about a year and a half was fundamentally Free-Soil, that is, the contention of slavery within certain limits. He repeatedly proclaimed that the war was being fought to save the Union, not to destroy slavery in the states where it existed. The restoration of the Union was a fundamental requirement of the national bourgeoisie, but Lincoln and his staff did not understand that the abolition of slavery was the kernel of the revolutionary situation and considered it a secondary problem. The restoration of the Union as it was before the conflict began was historically impossible. As Marx and Engels, who followed the war very carefully from Europe, wrote in an article published in early November 1861,

The present struggle between the South and the North is, therefore, nothing but a struggle between two social systems, between the system of slavery and the system of free labor. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent. It can only be ended by the victory of one system or the other.

Lincoln was greatly influenced by the politicians of the Border States. He overestimated the possibility that these states seceded from the Union and tried to conciliate the pro-slavery elements of this region. He did not realize that the South had been unable to take hold of these states because of mass opposition to secession. What was needed was the suppression of Copperhead (treasonous, pro-slavery) opposition there, not conciliation. This misconception greatly weakened Lincoln's policy in all respects, chiefly those concerning the issue of slavery.

In November 1861, Marx wrote,

Anxiety to keep the loyal slaveholders of the Border States in good humor, fear of throwing them into the arms of secession; in a word, tender regard for the interests, prejudices and sensibilities of these ambiguous allies, has smitten the Union government to half measures forced it to dissemble away the principle of the war, and to spare the foe's most vulnerable spot, the root of the evil — slavery itself.

Trying to conciliate and unite all the powerful sectors of the capitalist class, Lincoln excluded Abolitionists from the leadership of the administration and the army. But he included many anti-abolitionist elements and antiwar Democrats. For instance, of the 110 brigadier generals, 80 were Democrats. Under such leadership, it was very difficult for the North to make use of its enormous human and material potential.

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When the war began, most of the officers of the US Army left the Union and went to the side of the Confederacy. Most of the substitutes —with some exception like U. S. Grant and W. T. Sherman— were incompetent or pro-slavery elements that openly sabotaged the war. George B. McClellan, the inefficient commander-in-chief of the Union Army, became notorious for his treacherous military policy, which led the Union soldiers to numerous disasters. Marx said of him “next to a great defeat he feared most a great victory”.

For two terrible years the Confederate and the Union armies attacked each other in and around Virginia suffering heavy losses, but neither was able to carry out their respective slogans of “On to Richmond” and “On to Washington”. Due to the treacherous Copperhead opposition and to Lincoln’s conservative war policy, the North was unable to mobilize and employ its enormous human and material capacity, and the Union army suffered costly military defeats. It was clear that the conservative policy of “national union” and the contention of slavery was a failure and only led to disaster. A new revolutionary policy was needed.

The Republican administration, representative of the Northern capitalist interests, displayed a great effort in clearing the paths to big business enterprises. In 1862, it passed the Morrill Tariff that raised tariff rates to their 1846 level; and it continued to revise tariff schedules upward throughout the war. In 1862, the government voted to build the long debated transcontinental railroad from Omaha to Sacramento. The two companies involved —the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific— received generous cash loans and 30,000,000 acres of public land, in one of the biggest land robberies of history. In 1863, the Lincoln administration created a national banking system that was consonant with the interests of the Northern capitalists.

The Exploiting Classes and the War

The attitude of both, the planters and the Northern capitalists toward the war was the same: to remain far away from the battle front and to try to reap as much profit from the conflict as possible. The people said, “It’s a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight”. The conscription act passed by the Confederate Congress in April 1862 provided for the right to escape military service by paying for a substitute. Owners of more than 20 slaves were also exempted.

The conscription act was openly defied by armed bands of draft evaders throughout the Confederacy, particularly in the upland regions where there were many poor farmers. On several occasions, they were strong enough to fight and defeat detachments of Confederate cavalry that had been sent to round them up. These guerrillas were usually made up of poor farmers and runaway slaves acting together, and constituted a serious headache for the Confederacy throughout the war.

The Union fought the war on volunteer bases during the first two years. In May 1863, compulsory service was established by force of military necessity. The conscription act permitted the rich to escape military duty for a fee of \$300. The Copperhead elements opposed the obviously anti-democratic act to hamper the war, and provoked anti-war riots, especially in New York.

As in every war fought by the United States, the capitalists took advantage of the emergency created by the Civil War to cheat the government and rob the people. Some of the greatest fortunes of the United States —Morgan, Vanderbilt, Gould, Field, Rockefeller, etc. — have their origin in this period. A Nevins and H.S. Commager write “Favoritism, fraud, and corruption flourished in both sections. Washington became full of dishonest contractors, lobbyists, and other birds of prey, while some scheming-southerners made fortunes at the expense of their dying cause”.

The prices of basic commodities skyrocketed spreading misery among the masses and increasing the profits of the speculators. The banks charged the government colossal rates of interest on loans to finance the war. The railroad enterprises rose the rates for transporting troops and military supplies in 100 per cent and seized from the government about 30,000,000 acres of land of the common domain “for railroad building”.

The robbery of the munitions-makers and all those in connection with contracts-for military supplies was scandalous and its actual amount will never be known. The Army and the Navy were provided with vast quantities of defective weapons, inedible food, shoddy blankets and uniforms, and useless transports. Foster gives us an example, the case of J. P. Morgan who

...bought up a lot of condemned United States army rifles at \$2.00, sold them to the government at \$15.00, bought them again at 13.50 when the government recondemned them, and once more got rid of them

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to the military buyers at 122.00. These carabines were still so defective that they would shoot off the thumbs of the soldiers using them. This deal netted Morgan \$109,912 and helped establish his fortune.

During the war, trade with the enemy was common. Cotton was sold in New England and war materiel from the North was introduced into the South thanks to “permits” given by corrupt officials. This treasonous trade prolonged the bloody conflict and the sufferings of the people. Senator T. Eyck of New Jersey denounced in Congress that some movements of the Union army had been conducted more with a view to carry on trade than to strike down the Confederates.

The Radicals

From the very beginning of his administration, Lincoln was under the increasing pressure of the antislavery forces that claimed for more energetic and revolutionary policies from the government. The Revolutionary Left —the so-called Radicals— promoted the necessary revolutionary measures that made possible the defeat of the slaveholders and the emancipation of the slaves. The left wing pressure was a basic factor for the success of the antislavery Revolution.

The Revolutionary Left had no formal organization. In a prominent position among the Radicals were the Blacks. Their basic demands were emancipation, weapons to fight the planters, social equality, and the confiscation and distribution of the slaveholders’ lands. These liberation demands of the Blacks were the master key to defeat the Confederacy, but the Union government never made them its program. Lincoln assumed some of them only under military necessity. Frederick Douglas was the great leader of the Blacks during the Revolution. He was a resolute fighter for the manumission of the slaves, which he saw as the necessary precondition for winning the war. This brilliant revolutionary always had a clear understanding of the situation and constantly pointed out the necessary steps to follow.

The abolitionist forces of the nation were represented in Congress by an influential group of the Radicals. This Revolutionary Left in Congress was under the leadership of Thadeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, in the House and in the Senate respectively. Stevens and Sumner were brave fighters for the rights of the Blacks. In December 1861, they set up the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, which eventually became a basic tool for the Left in Congress. The Joint Committee constantly attacked Lincoln’s Free-Soil policy and pressed the administration with revolutionary proposals and legislation. They urged the need to satisfy the basic demands of the Blacks to win the war. The Radicals in Congress were supported by the majority of the workers, the farmers, the middle class, the Blacks, and the industrialists.

When the war began the Abolitionists, including Garrison, adopted a firm stand with the North. They formed the Emancipation League, which became an important element in the left block. The Abolitionists’ demands for emancipation became a strong appeal to many people in the midst of the war against the slaveholders.

The Marxists played an important role in the left, especially Karl Marx. Marx made a deep analysis of the conflict discovering its main traits and pointing out the revolutionary way to follow. Many of his articles were published in the New York Tribune, the most important newspaper of the United States at the time and were, probably, read by many of the Radical leaders. Engels also collaborated through his correspondence with Marx, especially as a military expert

The Second Phase of the War; From January 1, 1863 to April 9, 1865

Throughout the war, the Lincoln administration was under an ever-mounting mass pressure for a truly revolutionary policy. The basic demand, which eventually became irresistible, was the popular claim for the emancipation of the slaves.

Since the war began, the status of the Blacks became a problem for the Republican government. Many slave revolts took place throughout the South and large numbers of slaves flew into the Union lines. As the government had no settled policy regarding these runaway slaves, some generals decided to aid and protect them, but others refused to cooperate with the escaped slaves and even helped the slaveholders to recover their “property”. McClellan, the Democratic commander-in-chief of the Union army, for instance, promised to suppress severely any slave insurrection that might take place.

Under increasing pressure for emancipation, Congress took significant steps toward that end. Lincoln accepted them reluctantly, fearing that these attacks against slavery would push the Border States into

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secession. In August 1861, Congress declared free all the slaves employed in the Union army as workers in transportation or on fortification but in practice, this Act was ignored by the executive. In March 1862 the army and the navy were, prohibited to return runaway slaves to their Southern claimants. In April of the same year, slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia, thus satisfying an old claim of the Abolitionists. In June, slavery was prohibited in all the Territories of the United States. An act of July, provided for the confiscation of all the properties of the officers of the Southern confederacy, freed their slaves, and authorized the President to employ Blacks as soldiers. The US government also made a treaty with Great Britain for the suppression of slave trade, and recognized the Black republics of Haiti and Liberia.

Under the pressure of the adverse military situation and the mounting demand for abolition, Lincoln added emancipation to his proclaimed aim of restoring the Union. Accordingly, he elaborated a plan which contemplated gradual emancipation, the compensation of the slaveholders for the loss of their slaves, and the transportation of the Blacks to Africa or elsewhere. The Whole plan proved unworkable, for the demands of history—which coincided with the revolutionary program of the Left—where immediate emancipation without any compensation to the masters and without any colonization plans.

By the middle of 1862, the emancipation of the slaves became all indispensable measure for the North. The Northern bourgeoisie faced by the most pressing military necessity, and encouraged by its Black, worker and farmer allies, realized the need to, use the revolutionary weapon of slave emancipation against the Southern planters. Freeing the slaves was basic in order to break down the economic system of the South, to provide the US Army and navy with a fresh source of soldiers, and to raise the prestige of the Union cause among the democratic masses of the Country and of Europe. Lincoln himself stated that “it was a military necessity; absolutely essential for the salvation of the nation, hat we must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued”

On September 22, 1862, President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, one of the greatest documents of US history. It runs in these words:

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, do proclaim that on the first day of January, 1863, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall then be thenceforward and forever free”

The Proclamation also provided for the admission of the manumitted slaves into the US Army and Navy. With this historic pronouncement, Lincoln showed that he had the special quality to adopt the indispensable fighting politics to win the war, when pressed by the masses and by the military situation. The Emancipation Proclamation also gave Abraham Lincoln a high place among the great of the world. The Emancipation Proclamation was a great victory for all the antislavery forces of the Nation, chiefly for the Blacks.

Subjected to scrutiny, the document reveals the hesitant and ambiguous policy of the coalition leading the North. Issued in September, the proclamation was not to take effect until January 1, that is, three months later. It did not free all the slaves of the nation, but only those in the states “the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States”, that is, the states occupied by the Confederate army. An obvious question would be, why did not Lincoln free the slaves of the Border States and other regions occupied by the Union Army, and instead declared free the slaves under the control of the enemy forces, that is, those he could not free? And why the three-month period? Was this an invitation to those who had seceded and revolted to return to the Union before January? That is what the document reads. According to the Proclamation, having slaves was acceptable if the slaveholder was loyal to the United States.

Nevertheless, once the document was known, nothing could stop the slaves from escaping from their masters and rushing to the Union Army. The slaves of the Border States, ignored by the Proclamation, took their liberty by their own hands as well. In practice, the Emancipation Proclamation, thanks of the actions of the Blacks themselves, freed the slaves.

The Northern bourgeoisie did not support it because of its just and democratic content. For them the Proclamation was only a transitory weapon to be used against the planters. But, strategically it meant that the broad alliance of forces of the North moved from a position of a confused defensive to that of a revolutionary offensive.

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The Blacks and all the pro-democratic and anti-slavery forces of the nation received Lincoln's Proclamation with immense rejoicing. The happy news soon filtered into the South encouraging more daring revolt conspiracies, and flights. The Proclamation gave an enormous moral impetus to the Northern cause. The adoption of a genuinely revolutionary and democratic aim granted the Union the necessary source of fresh strong-willed soldiers to fill its Army and Navy, especially from the ranks of the Blacks.

Of great historical significance was the Homestead Act 1862. It was in line with the pro-democratic and progressive policies that the government was assuming under the pressure of the radicals and military necessity. This act of Congress gave, free of charge except for a slight fee for registering the land, a track of one hundred and sixty acres of public land to any settler who would build a home and cultivate the land for four years. Only men who had borne arms against the United States were excluded. The satisfaction of the claim for free homesteads—a measure the poor settlers had been fighting for since colonial times—greatly enhanced the prestige and the support of the Union among the farmers and the toilers of the nation.

On November 1862, Lincoln took another bold step toward winning the war by dismissing the “overcautious” General McClellan. Let the events of the days preceding his dismissal serve as a piece of evidence of the treasonous policy of the “Northern” commander-in-chief. On September 17, 1862, the Northern army fought one of the greatest battles of the war against the forces of the Southern General Robert F. Lee, on the Antietam Creek, near the north bank of the Potomac. McClellan ordered assaults on Lee's position at different times and in so disconnected a manner that each was repulsed singly. Nevertheless, on the following morning Lee found himself in a situation, which determined him to retreat.

As a military success, the battle of Antietam demanded to be followed up. Reinforcements had now come to McClellan, and Lincoln telegraphed: “Please do not let him get off without being hurt”. But Lee, who was between the broad Potomac and a Northern army twice as large as his own, was allowed to cross the river. Lincoln came to the Antietam to see things for himself and departed convinced that McClellan could cut off Lee from Richmond, the Confederate capital. But it was not until October 28, more than five weeks after the battle that McClellan began to cross the Potomac, and took a week in the process. This completely tired Lincoln's patience, and on November 5, McClellan was removed from his command.

The Blacks in the Civil War

For a long time, historiography ignored or minimized the role of the Blacks in the Civil War and presented them as an indifferent mass, waiting patiently for the Union soldiers to rescue them from slavery. But this was not so. From Frederick Douglass, the great revolutionary leader, to the unknown Black soldier who died in the field, the Blacks had an epic performance in the War. Their heroic fight for independence was basic for the victory of the US people in their epoch-making strife against the Southern slavocracy. Since the war broke out, and in spite of the Lincoln government insistent claims that its sole aim was to save the Union, the Abolitionists—Black and white—realized that was the great historical opportunity for the slaves, and began to demand emancipation and the right for the Blacks to participate in the struggle against the Confederacy.

Facing an adverse military situation, and under the pressure of the anti-slavery forces—especially the militant fight of the Blacks themselves—the government was forced to yield to these demands. One of the greatest blows delivered by the slaves to the Confederacy was their mass flight to the Union lines. It has been estimated that during the war about half a million slaves managed to escape from the South, in spite of the fact that the planters tightened their system of forcible suppression to the utmost. With the war, slavery was doomed for the simple reason that nothing could keep the slaves in bondage, with or without an official emancipation. In the Border States, where the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply, the institution perished because of the bold action of the slaves. In Missouri, for instance, there were 112,000 slaves in 1860. By 1864, there were no more than 22,000, the rest having escaped to the North and the Northwest. More than 100,000 slaves succeeded in escaping from Kentucky and Maryland. Tens of thousands of these escaped slaves enlisted in the Federal Army.

The flight of the slaves threw the South into chaos. If the Conscription law of 1862 exempted one owner or overseer for every 20 slaves, in 1864, in spite of the fact that the lack of manpower was then the most serious problem of the Confederate Army, it was necessary to exempt one white man for every 15 slaves. Thus, the insubordination of the slaves deprived the Southern army of thousands of potential soldiers and increased the protests of the poor whites against the ‘rich man's war’.

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All over the Confederacy, the slaves intensified their struggle against their exploiters. The Southern economic system was systematically sabotaged by the slaves: the crops were ruined; the working animals were hurt the tools were broken. The slaves “slowed up”, and went into strike demanding better conditions and, even, the payment of wages. Many slaveholders abandoned physical punishments terrified at the slaves’ retaliations because the killing of masters and overseers, and the burning of plantations, became a common phenomenon in the South. Jefferson Davis’ residence, for instance, was burned by his own domestic slaves in January 1864. The slaves also cooperated with Confederate deserters —more than 100,000 Southern soldiers flew— and Northern escaped prisoners. Of particular importance were the guerrilla activities of the runaway slaves. During the War communities of maroons flourished in the woods and swamps of the South. They usually fought together with outlawed poor whites, deserters, and escaped Union soldiers.

The runaway slaves not only weakened the Confederacy but also strengthened the Union forces. About 200,000 Blacks, most of them escaped slaves, served in the Union army as cooks, carpenters, nurses, fortification, builders, and many other essential occupations. Large numbers served as spies and guides, who, under great risk entered the Confederate territory repeatedly in search for information. The most famous of these spies was the brave Harriet Tubman. But the greatest deeds were performed by the Blacks as soldiers. More than 200,000 Blacks fought in the Federal armies, and 87,000 were killed in action. They participated in about 450 battles with an inspiring courage that was extremely important for the destruction of the power of the Confederacy.

The Black soldiers fought in spite of the shameful racial discrimination to which they were subjected within the Federal Army, and the fact that they were generally shot when caught prisoners by the Confederate forces. The Black soldiers knew they were fighting to liberate their own people from slavery, and this led them to incredibly courageous actions. H. Aptheker, in his essay “The Black in the Civil War” (1953), quotes the words of several officers of the Federal army who gave testimony of the bravery of the Black soldiers. Let us see some of them.

In April 1863, the Confederate forces made a desperate attempt to conquer the tremendously important city of New Orleans. Ship Island, the key to the city, was defended by three white and seven Black Federal companies. Attacked by a force five times more numerous, and under the fire of a Federal gunboat that had been sent to help the besieged men and actually shelled the Black troops, the defenders were able to repulse the enemy. The Federal commander wrote that the Black soldiers “were constantly in the thickest of the fight, and by their unflinching bravery, and admirable handling of their commands reflected great honor upon the flag”.

During the siege to a strong Confederate force entrenched in Port Hudson, Louisiana, in May 1863, two Black regiments were ordered to attack against direct and cross fire. General Banks reported, “The deeds of heroism performed by these colored men were such as the proudest white men might emulate. Their colors are torn to pieces by shot, and literally bespattered by blood and brains.”

Colonel Thomas W. Higginson, the commander of a Black regiment wrote,

“...the key to the successful prosecution of this war lies in the unlimited employment of Black troops... they have peculiarities of temperament position and motive which belong to them alone...They are fighting for their homes and families, and they show that resolution and sagacity which a personal purpose gives. It would have been madness to attempt, with the bravest white troops what I have successfully accomplished with the Black ones.”

In March 1865, the Confederate government at the verge of total collapse passed a law calling for the enlistment of Black slaves into its army as soldiers. This desperate measure virtually freed the slaves who would be eventually recruited. In this way, the planters recognized the inevitable destruction of the slave system. But it was all in vain, for not a single Black soldier rose to defend the Confederacy.

The Reconstruction Period

The Tasks of Reconstruction

Once the war ended, the Northern bourgeoisie faced the enormous task of reconstruction. The term “reconstruction” is here applied to the revolutionary transformation of the economic, social, and political aspects of Southern life upon the new capitalist basis.

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The fundamental revolutionary tasks for the full success of the antislavery revolution were: to reorganize the political life of the Southern states so that the Black and white democratic masses would have the control of state governments and the planters would never return to political power; to break the power of the planters forever by confiscating their lands and distributing them among the ex-slaves and the poor whites; to grant economic, political, educational, and social equality to the Blacks.

The great coalition of anti-slavery forces, gathered in the Republican Party was greatly strengthened when the war ended. The industrialists, in particular, had acquired an enormous economic power because of the industrial boom that accompanied the war, land robbery, the high tariff—which was at 47 per cent, war profiteering, etc. The farmers had also benefited from the rise of foodstuff prices and by the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862. The working class greatly extended and matured in the years of fighting. The end of the war also brought into the Republican Party important allies from the South: the urban middle class, the rural poor, and the manumitted slaves.

Most of the Blacks, although greatly strengthened, were facing the extremely complex and difficult process of adaptation to their new status of free men. They were almost all illiterate. They had no homes, no land, no animals, and about no clothing to cover their bodies. They had little knowledge of the white man's institutions and customs, like the concept of property, the use of money, wages, politics, etc. And under such handicaps, they had to face the attacks of the still strong planters who had decided to keep them in bondage and exploitation at any cost.

The Republican Party was divided into two wings. A left wing led by Thaddeus Stevens, Frederick Douglass, Charles Sumner, and others. These Radicals, although often disconcerted regarding the path to follow, were determined to carry the Revolution to the end by completing the defeat of the planters and by granting the Blacks some political rights. The right wing was in favor of easy terms for the defeated planters and the least rights for the Blacks.

Once the war was over, the two sections of the Democratic Party joined, thus restoring the historic alliance between the Southern planters and the Northern interests. Throughout the Reconstruction Period, the Democratic Party struggled to save the planter's socioeconomic system from the transformations promoted by the Revolution and to return them to political power. Although greatly weakened by the recent military defeat, the counterrevolutionary coalition was in no way subdued. The planters had not been destroyed as a class; their economic controls had not been torn out of their hands since their plantation system remained untouched (although cotton production in 1866 was less than half of what it was in 1860, the price now was three times greater); and the planters and their Northern allies held the powerful and influential Democratic Party under their command.

Democracy in the South

In the fall of 1868, general Ulysses S. Grant was elected President of the United States. The new Republican president continued with the Radical program with decreasing enthusiasm until 1876. It was under Grant's presidency that Congress enacted the Fifteenth Amendment to maintain the Blacks' right to vote—the basis of Republican control of the South. This amendment, which was later violated by the reactionary forces of the South, states, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude".

This period of democratic governments in the South has sometimes been denominated as a period of "brutal Black domination". The fact is that the Blacks never held a dominant position in any of the new state governments. They only kept a small percentage of the local, state, and Federal posts, and usually those of less importance. The Blacks and their white allies, on the other hand, never had the situation under their control, for they had to work within the limits set up by the victorious Northern bourgeoisie who exercised a firm control over the military, political, and economic institutions of the South. The Reconstruction legislatures, nevertheless, passed a large number of progressive laws as those providing for equal civil rights, the creation of public social services, universal manhood suffrage, the establishment of more equitable tax structures, and new rights for women, the building of a public school system, and the abolition of the Black Codes, old slave laws, barbarous punishments, etc. Some of this legislation survived the wave of reaction that followed.

Nevertheless, the reforms could never go beyond the confines imposed by the Northern bourgeoisie. So, in spite of the strong claims of the Blacks for land, this basic demand was firmly rejected by the Federal

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government. The confiscation of the estates of the big cotton planters and their distribution among the freed slaves and poor whites was necessary for the completion of the revolution and the ultimate defeat of the planters. But the bourgeoisie, afraid to touch the “sacred” principle of private property considered that the enfranchisement of the Black was sufficient to break the planters’ resistance. T. Stevens fought in vain for land for the ex-slaves. The Blacks themselves carried out a brave fight for land. They not only petitioned the government—for they hoped they would receive “40 acres and a mule”—but also, in many cases, they divided abandoned plantations, shared out the tools and the working animals, and began to cultivate the land. In most cases they were later removed by the government or by local reaction. This failure to push through the agrarian reform of the Revolution safeguarded the economic power of the planters and provided a basis for their eventual return to political power.

In their fight for democracy, the Blacks had two fundamental allies in this period. A large section of the Southern whites, chiefly poor whites and middle class elements; and the Northerners who had come into the South with the Federal Army or those who had been interested with Reconstruction tasks. The planters and their agents gave them the irrespective categories of “scalawags” and “carpetbaggers” and denounced the former as traitors and the latter as opportunists.

The most important revolutionary organizations of the Southern masses were the Union (or Loyal) Leagues. They were born in the North during the war with the purpose of fighting Copperhead opposition, and with the triumph of the Union, they rapidly spread throughout the South. The Union Leagues were made up of Blacks and poor whites, chiefly, and their historical task was to defend the execution of the Radical Reconstruction program against the attacks of reaction. They had a membership of about 500,000.

The Union Leagues and the Freedman’s Bureau did a great deal of political educational work among the masses of freed slaves and poor whites. The Leagues frequently formed militia bodies to protect themselves, the Black’s right to vote, and the Reconstruction governments from the attacks of the reactionary forces. But for the Union Leagues, the Reconstruction governments could never have been made to function.

The Rise of Reaction

The settlement of the new democratic governments in the South was a heavy blow for the planters, but they soon realized that they needed to break the political alliance of the poor whites and the Blacks to get control of the situation. The old principle of the exploiting classes “divide and rule” was applied again. To this end, the planters and their agents made use of two weapons; white supremacist propaganda and terrorism. Manipulating the poor whites’ racial prejudices deeply rooted by centuries of white supremacist propaganda, the planters successfully agitated against Black-white collaboration and threatened with the slander of “Black supremacy”. A great deal of the confusion and disintegration prevalent among the Black-poor white coalition in those years resulted from this poisonous racialist propaganda.

With the connivance of the Northern reactionaries, the planters proceeded to set up a reign of terror throughout the South and to drown the Revolution in the blood of the Blacks. Under the demagogical slogans of the defense of law and order, white womanhood, patriotism, religion and civilization, they organized a network of terrorist organization for the bloody suppression of the Blacks and their white allies.

The most important of these terrorist organizations was the Ku Klux Klan, founded in Pulaski, Tennessee, in 1865. The Klan quickly spread throughout the South and soon became the fundamental extra-legal arm of the counterrevolution in preventing the Blacks and poor whites from exercising their political rights, especially their right to vote and hold office. The Ku Klux Klan was chiefly organized by ex-Confederate Army officers.

The Klan perpetrated countless acts of violence in the South. The Blacks and their supporters were tortured, shot, burned alive; Reconstruction officials and Union Club members were massacred; homes and public buildings were burned. “Organized clubs of masked men rode through the country at night, marking their course by the whipping shooting wounding maiming mutilation and murder of women, children and defenseless men, whose houses were forcibly entered while they slept”

The Blacks offered a brave resistance to the Klan but they were under great disadvantage. The planters’ terrorism was aided by the fact that at the close of the war Confederate soldiers were allowed to keep their small arms, while discharged Northern Black soldiers had to give up theirs. The weak policies of the Grant administration also helped the planters.

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By the early 1870's, the white supremacy agitation of the planters had succeeded in splitting the Southern revolutionary coalition. The Republican Party in the South became more and more a party of Blacks and white officeholders. By 1873, the number of Republican votes in the South was approximately the same the number of Black votes.

The Blacks also lost the support of the Northern bourgeoisie. This meant the abandonment of the Revolution in the South and the surrender of the Black minority to the organized violence of the planters. The betrayal of the Northern bourgeoisie to their Black allies was, basically, the result of two factors:

First, the Northern bourgeoisie had already achieved their fundamental objectives: they had defeated the threat posed by the attack of the slaveholders and attained full control of the federal government and of the national market. Now the planters had to share political power in the South with the growing Southern bourgeoisie. The Union had been preserved and the British influence from the South removed. They had granted themselves high tariff policies. Having removed the fundamental obstacles to the economic and political development of capitalism, the Northern bourgeoisie were only interested in keeping the Blacks in a position of inferiority, which would allow them to participate in their exploitation.

Second, the Northern capitalists were facing new internal enemies. After the war was over, the great antislavery coalition of the North disintegrated. The industrial workers and farmers increasingly resented the rapacious exploitation of the developing financial oligarchy and class struggle rose to new heights. Threatened by the popular upheaval, the industrialists, the bankers, and other Northern big exploiters, turned to an alliance with the reactionary elements of the South. Once the menace to their interests had been destroyed, they moved to the formation of a bloc of the exploiters against the people's movements.

Once the revolutionary front split, the planters and their allies proceeded to capture the Southern democratic governments from the people's forces. The Blacks and those allies who still stood with them made a brave but futile resistance to violence and terrorism. In a virtual civil war, the planters and their allies conquered the Southern state governments. Thousands of Blacks were killed in a reign of terror that lasted nearly a decade. The last resistance was finally crushed in 1877 when President Rutherford B. Hayes withdrew the Federal Army from South Carolina and Louisiana, the last strongholds of the Republicans.

In the post-Reconstruction period, the Blacks lost many of their revolutionary gains, chiefly the right to vote and to be elected. A wave of terror swept over the Blacks. Night-riding gangs of assassins, organized by the Ku Klux Klan, committed atrocities with the connivance of the authorities. Countless Blacks were brutally murdered by lynching mobs. By means of terrorism and white chauvinist propaganda, the Blacks were robbed of the civil rights they had won in the Civil War and driven into a new system of exploitation, the sharecropping system. The bitter resistance of the Blacks was futile for the reactionary forces were supported by the government.

To legalize "white supremacy" the planters and their allies replaced the abolished Black Codes with the Jim Crow system. This outrageous system of social discrimination forced the Blacks into inhuman conditions of social inferiority and segregation in respect to marriage, education, work, travel, hotels, theaters, etc. The Jim Crow system was incorporated to the new Southern state constitutions. To help the legalization of the Jim Crow system, the Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act unconstitutional in 1883. The savage Jim Crow system was a forerunner of Fascist racialism and South African Apartheid.

Imperialism

The last decades of the Nineteenth Century marked a rapid increase in the tempo of economic growth and development in the United States. During that period, the nation passed from a developing agricultural country—which occupied the fourth place among the industrial nations of the world—into a mature manufacturing nation which relied ever more on foreign countries for raw materials for its industry, exported its surplus manufactured production and capital, and ranked first in industrial production. At the same time, a profound change was taking place in US society: the rise of monopolies. The system of free competition, which had prevailed up to the Civil War, was superseded by the rise of monopolies and, by the turn of the century, monopolistic domination in the form of trusts was the distinctive feature of US society. Indeed, the United States, like the great European powers and rising Japan, was entering a new stage of capitalist development—imperialism.

The outcome of the Civil War originated a self-sustained economic growth, which placed the United States, at the turn of the century, in the first place among the great industrial nations. A result of the war was

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the destruction of the planting aristocracy of the South, which had practically ruled the United States in the past. On the other hand, the war meant the triumph of a new combination of powers: Northern capitalists and free farmers.

The planting aristocracy lay prostrate: slave labor —the ultimate basis for their powers and peculiarities of their culture— had been abolished in two great strokes: the Emancipation Proclamation during the war and the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which prohibited slavery throughout the land. In addition, the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, deprived the leaders of the South of every political privilege until Congress removed the disability by a two-thirds vote. Death in the battlefields, destruction by the war, and economic sanctions by the victors completed the ruin of the Southern aristocracy.

The capitalist class, on the other hand, marched onward at great speed. During the civil conflict it made large profits but of war contracts and out of the rising prices of manufactured goods. It was also benefited with the issuance by the Government of bonds and notes that facilitated trade and made possible larger business enterprises, and by moderate tax on incomes, abolished soon after the end of the war.

Tariffs were raised to the highest point yet attained, thus protecting the growing United States market for the national manufacturers and other producers. A national banking system was established in the interest of the national financial classes, a banking system that would serve well the moneyed interests against possible inimical local legislation. A policy of generous grants from the federal treasury to aid internal improvements was inaugurated in the form of gifts or loans to railroad companies. The Homestead Act of 1862, which gave free land to would-be settlers, together with land grants to the railways, provided for the rapid disposal of the public domain, thus ensuring the settlement of the West, the growth of population, the building of a gigantic network of railroads and the multiplication of new enterprises. Also, the Fourteenth Amendment granted the United States Supreme' Court constitutional power to strike down an act of any state or local government menacing to "sound" business policy, thus protecting business. The Immigration Act of 1864 gave federal authorization to the importation of workers under contract, thus opening the country to a flood of European labor that supplied the new industries and averted the danger of higher wages. Finally, it cannot be forgotten that the salvation of the Union assured an immense national market for industry.

All these gains for capitalist development were made possible because of the war and the defeat of the Southern planters. The slave owning gentlemen were no longer in a position to place obstacles to the free development of the productive forces of the nation.

The Revolution in Industry and the Growth of Monopolies.

In the short period that elapsed from the end of the war in 1865 to the turn of the century, the United States became the first industrial nation of the world for the quantity and value of its manufactures. The change of character of US economy from the predominance of agriculture to that of industry, the passing of small-scale shop production to mass production in large factories, the swiftness and gigantic dimensions of the transformation and the social and political consequences of the process make it appropriate to talk of an industrial revolution. Many factors led to this extraordinary industrial development and triumph of business enterprise.

One of these is of course, the abundance of natural resources in the Federal Union. The United States, with Alaska, occupied a territory equal to that of all of Europe, and it was extremely rich in coal, oil, copper, gold, silver, iron, timber, and fertile lands. For example, the Mississippi River and its tributaries drained one third of the USA and linked places thousands of miles away; the Great Lakes were of great importance too. But by far the most important factor in the industrial development was the triumph of the capitalist North and the destruction of the slave owning aristocracy during the war. This fact cleared the way for the further development of the productive forces of society and sped the tempo of the economic and social processes. The war itself with its vast mobilization of men and resources and its use and destruction of commodities, was a stimulant to larger production. Boots, blankets, uniforms, train rails, guns, laborsaving farm machinery, etc., were needed in much larger quantities- than before and business rose in search for profit. In the process, the capitalists augmented their fortunes and became better prepared for greater undertakings in the future.

Foremost of all reasons, the victory of the North put state power in the hands of the commercial, banking and industrial classes that were now in a position to promote industrial development with every

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means at their disposal. They passed all the laws and sponsored the policies beneficial to industrial growth in the interest of capitalist enterprise. Sound money legislation, high tariffs, the importation of labor by contract, and land grants and money subsidies to private enterprise are only some of the better-known examples of the friendly attitude of the government towards business.

The new scale of production required a change in the form of property, as the single or few owners who ran their business as personal affairs usually proved incapable of mobilizing so much capital. Corporate property in which the overall —value of the business company was divided into thousands of shares which were sold and bought in the market to investors who then became the stockholders or collective owners of the business. A legal entity or corporation represented the stockholders. Corporations become the main form of property at the end of the century. In 1900, three fourths of the manufactured products came from factories owned by associations of stockholders or corporations.

The modern corporations made such a large share of the total output of commodities that they were in a position to establish —alone or allied— monopolies in order to control prices and production. This economic phenomenon matured so fast that by the turn of the century the United States economy was essentially dominated by monopolistic combinations of various sorts.

Beginning in the 1880's monopolies appeared in most of the branches of production and services: oil, steel, telegraph, telephone, electricity, sugar, lead, etc. By the end of the 19th century, American finance capital was supreme at home. To many the home market for commodities and capital now seemed too restricted. The national boundaries were a straitjacket that could no longer contain the expansive force of US capitalism. The United States was ready to embark in foreign conquests, peacefully if possible, by war if necessary.

Social and Democratic Struggles

In the last decades of the Nineteenth Century, the growth of the Nation, the exploitation of natural resources, the utilization of science and technology in production, and the increase in productivity and social wealth were of such nature as to seem the workings of, magic. Nevertheless, the riches and wonders of modern society did not reach people in the same way. The United States was a class society and the opportunities to enjoy the fruits of social labor depended on the place people had in the social hierarchy. The workers, who were the pillars on which that society lay, had many reasons to be disgruntled and to struggle for either bettering the position or subverting the social order.

The Labor Movement

The modern working class movement began in the United States at the end of the Civil War. Before that time, it had little weight in the country due to the immaturity of capitalism.

It was the triumph of industrial capitalism over the slave-owning aristocracy during the Civil War which created the material basis for the extraordinary growth of wage labor and, therefore, for the labor movement. The Civil War brought about such a speedy advance of capitalism that it only took one generation to complete the settlement of the West, crisscross the country with railroads, create the giant corporations and import millions of immigrants to work in the Nation's industries. Besides, the war put an end to the progressive role of the US bourgeoisie, which now abjured of their democratic institutions and revolutionary traditions.

The growth and concentration of the working class can be followed in the following and the total US population grew from 50,155 789 in 1860, to 75,994,575 in 1900; but during the same period the proportion of urban population went up from 16.1 to 32 per cent. In regards to the number of wage earners, the 1849 census registered 957,000, that of 1889, 4252,000 and that of 1914, 7,036,600. The number of wage earners grew sevenfold between 1849 and 1914 while productivity during the same period grew 24 times. This is a result of the utilization of machinery and the concentration of the labor force.

Industrial development created other objective conditions that favored the workers movement. The historian of US economy, Harold Underwood Faulkner points out,

Big factories brought the workers together in cities where they could mingle with their fellows, exchange their ideas more readily, and combine more easily for resistance. Improvement in paper manufacture and printing made it possible to spread their program, develop loyalty, and weld the

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local organizations more firmly together. An aggressive labor as it developed, contributed not only to the education of the worker in the problems involved, but in like manner, made capital conversant with the aims of labor.

The Conquest and Colonization of the Far West

One of the most important consequences of the Civil War was that the huge territories lying beyond the states alongside the Mississippi Valley were disposed of according to the interests of the victorious farmers and capitalists. This domain was almost equal in surface area to all the states in the Union combined. However, it was very different from the older East. More than half the region was arid plain and broken land. In some of the areas near the Mississippi-Missouri Valleys and in broad belts near the Pacific shore there was fertile soil, but the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades had huge tracts of lands of plateaus and basins surrounded by mountains and deserts.

This region contained gold, silver, copper and tin deposits, pasturelands, timber and a wide range of climates. Overall, however, this wide expanse of plain, mountain and desert was, the year the Civil War started, an undeveloped land, awaiting settlement and exploitation. Then the Native Americans and buffaloes roamed at will, yet undisturbed in their free life.

Of paramount importance for the settling of the Far West was the Homestead Act, passed soon after the beginning of the Civil War, in 1862, by which free farms were to be given to all adult citizens, and aliens who had declared their intention of becoming citizens, and were willing to move and settle in the West. The original allotment would be 160 acres per household and would become private property after five years tenure. By this act, in less than twenty years over 50,000,000 acres of land were transferred to private ownership.

Shortly after Lincoln signed this important act (made possible by the absence of Southern oppositions in Congress) the contested issue of a railroad to the Pacific was settled. The proper route for a transcontinental was long disputed, and no agreement had been reached due to Southern opposition or counter-projects. Once the Southern gentlemen had been ousted from the Federal Government, the farmer-industrialist combination chose a Northern route, beginning at Omaha, Nebraska, and running across Wyoming Utah and Nevada to California. To the private corporation authorized to build the road, Congress gave the right of way and generous subsidies in adjacent stone, timber, earth for the construction projects, and land on both sides of the tracks, as well as credit.

Construction of the Union Pacific, the first transcontinental railroad, began in 1863 and finished six years later. Other transcontinental railroads were soon started, and by 1884, four had been completed. The rapid building of transcontinental, together with the network of connecting lines was very important to open the new lands for settlement and to provide all outlets for their production. Unlike the pioneers of an earlier time, the would-be settlers could move much faster to the "Promised Land". In this way, in many parts of the West the railroad preceded settlement, making colonization easier and quicker.

Railroads played an active role in the development and settlement of the West. Railroads needed — as the periodic economic depression clearly showed— a closer settlement of the regions penetrated by their lines if they wanted to make profits. Railway operators, together with land speculators, began to promote colonization in a colossal scale. Towns were charted on the plains, advertising campaigns were organized, the eastern states and the Old World were scoured for settlers to take lands under the Homestead Act or buy tracts from railway companies or speculators. An outstanding example of the labors taken by railway promoters was afforded by James J. Hill, head of the Great Northern and allied railway lines. He sent agents to the older states to tell people of the opportunities of the advancing frontier, and when large groups of prospective settlers were ready, he provided passenger and freight trains to carry the immigrants west, to their new destination. His motto was, "We need landless men for manless lands". Hill also took special pains to ensure the welfare of the communities in the railway lines, and looked for markets for their production as far as Japan and China. Hill knew well that the prosperity of his lines depended on the amount of business he carried in freight and passenger trains.

A more sordid side of the story of railroads is inherent to the basis on which they operate under capitalism: the search for the largest possible profit. Railroad operators were determined to make their fortunes by any means, whether they did or did not do any social good. In the first place, railroads became great landowners, having received over 180 million acres in grants from Federal and State governments, an

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area larger than Texas. They used that land —often acquired by bribing congressional representatives and local officials— to sell at speculative prices. They also operated construction companies that channeled exorbitant construction charges into the pockets of the operators; they speculated in Wall Street in the securities of their own and competitive roads. Often they offered inefficient services for which they charged high or discriminatory rates. To the railroad promoters, the lines were only a means of amassing immense fortunes.

The Native Americans were a serious obstacle for the acquisition and settlement of the western lands. At the time of the Civil War there were about 300 000 Native Americans in the West, distributed in the tribes of the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapahos, Apaches, Comanche and other minor ones. Homesteaders and prospectors entered their hunting grounds, offended the native population in many ways and invaded the tribes' lands. They enrolled the Federal Government in a campaign to drive the Native Americans from the desired districts or simply to exterminate them. In 1862, a genocidal military campaign was started against the tribes, and it lasted for a quarter of a century. The ideology behind the military campaigns against the Native Americans is best exemplified by the statement made by General Philip Sheridan, commissioned in 1865 to "pacify" the frontier "There are no good Indians but dead Indians."

The Native Americans were great fighters, with capacity for resistance that made them very hard indeed to subdue. They had domesticated the wild horse of the Plains and had become incredible horsemen who could hit one place and be hundreds of miles away the next day. They carried a short bow and were able to shoot their arrows faster than a revolver while riding. In the war against the Native Americans all kinds of tricks and treachery were used to drive them into reservations, but what finally put an end to their resistance was the extermination of the buffalo herd.

The American buffalo herd had been estimated at 12,000,000 head in the 1860's. The Plains tribes lived off the buffalo. From the buffalo, they got their food, clothing, shelter and raw materials for their weapons. As their daily life depended on the buffalo in every sense, their ritual and worship were dedicated to the success of the buffalo hunt. A buffalo stampede could overturn a train so, to the railroad companies, the buffaloes were obstacles in their way and they hired men to slaughter them. When it was discovered in 1871 that buffalo hides could be processed into commercial leather, killing buffaloes became a business. Organized parties equipped with repeating rifles killed them by the thousand. It is estimated that in the years 1872 to 1874 the annual carnage of buffaloes averaged 3,000,000. In the middle eighties, the great buffalo herd had practically disappeared with only a few hundreds left alive deep in the Canadian Woods. With the disappearing buffalo went the means by which the Native Americans could have resisted the settlers' encroachments on their land. Helpless and decimated, by 1890 the tribes were reduced to reservations in the worst lands of the country.

The country did not need to wait for the end of the Civil War to begin settling the Far West. During the war, thousands of people took to the road. In 1864, about 150,000 immigrants left from the Missouri River Country for the Far West. That same year, 75,000 people passed westward through Omaha. At the close of the war, the westward movement was accelerated. Thousands of young men, released from the army, were encouraged by the government to go west by allowing them to count their military service terms as part of the five years' occupancy required by the Act of 1862 for the permanent possession of a free homestead. In this way, the population of Kansas and Nebraska had risen in twenty years from just over 100,000 to over a million and a half. The central frontier had reached the last belt of arable land in the west and the stream of migration had been turned northward beyond Minnesota and the Dakotas. By the late 1880's, the mountain regions had been prospected for minerals and all the best land between the Mississippi and the mountains had been staked out and transferred to private ownership. Only the Indian Territory, a large reservation in what is now Oklahoma was left. Finally, in 1889, the Federal Government opened this area to white settlers. On the eve and hour set for the opening of this new Territory, an army of white invaders lay encamping on the borders waiting for the appropriate moment to sweep into the region. Our National Hero, José Matí escribed the invasion in a memorable chronicle filled with the imagery of present day motion pictures,

Ya esa misma hora, en las llanuras desiertas, los colonos ávidos de la tierra india, esperando el mediodía del lunes para invadir la nueva Canaan, la morada antigua del pobre seminole, el país de la leche y de la miel limpian sus rifles o alborotan, y no se oye en aquella frontera viva, sujeta solo por la tropa vigilante, más que el grito de saludo del miserable que empieza a ser dueño, del especulador que ve espumas de oro del pícaro que saca su ganancia del vicio de la muerte. ¿Quién llegara

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primero? ¿Quién pondrá la primera estaca en los solares de la calle principal? ¿Quién tomará posesión con los tacones de sus botas de los rincones fértiles? Leguas de carros; turbas de jinetes; descargas a cielo abierto; cantos y rogativas; tabernas y casas de poliandria; un ataúd, y detrás una mujer y un niño; por los cuatro confines rodean la tierra libre los colonos; se oye como un alarido: — ¡Oklahoma! ¡Oklahoma! —Y van pasando, pasando para las fronteras los pueblos en muda, los pueblos de carros. Se les cansa el caballo, y empujan la rueda. No puede el hombre solo, y la mujer se pone a la otra. Se le dobla La rodilla al animal y el hijo hombrón, tonel cinto lleno de cuchillos lo acaricia y besa. Los días acaban, y no la romería. Ahora son mil veteranos sin mujeres que van con carros buenos, “a buscar tierra”. Cien hombres ahora, con un Black a la cabeza, que va a pie, solo. Ahora un grupo de jinetes alquilones de bota y camisa azul con cuatro revólveres a la cintura y en el arzón el rifle de Winchester, escupiendo en la divinidad y pasándose el frasco. Por allí vienen 100 más, y una mujer a caballo que los guía. Ahí pasa el carro de la pobre Dickinson, que trae dentro sus tres hijas y sus dos rifles. Muchos carros llevan en el toldo este letrero: “Tierra a muerte”. Uno, del que por todas partes sale, botas, como de hombres tendidos en el interior, lleva este: “Hay muchos imbéciles como nosotros.”

Foreign Policy

At the turn of the Nineteenth Century, American capitalism had already evolved into its monopoly stage. Having conquered its home market, the young arrogant US imperialism began to look greedily at the possessions of the old colonial powers. Under the increasing pressure of the accumulated capitals, the US government began to seek outlets for them in other countries where profit rates could be higher than at home. Accordingly, the US foreign policy, dictated by the big monopoly interests of the nation, was directed to secure colonies and spheres of influence beyond the national frontiers. In a world divided up into colonies and spheres of influence, the US increasingly aggressive foreign policy inevitably collided with that of its imperialist rivals.

Up to the 1880's postwar US capitalism was chiefly concerned with the colonization and exploitation of the immense national territory. When expansionism was begun again under the new conditions of growing monopoly capitalism described above, the chief interests of US expansionists were Canada, Latin America, and Asia. They viewed the purchase of Alaska as a means to “form the Northern arm of a giant American pincer movement” to squeeze Canada into the US fold.

Pan-Americanism

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, England exercised an important economic and political control over several countries of South America while the United States held its sway over most of Central America and the Caribbean area.

US capitalism, then quickly becoming imperialist, had two primary objectives regarding Latin America: to remove British influence from the young Latin American republics and subject them to the control of US monopolies. The period is thus characterized by the bitter conflict of these two imperialist powers, each seeking to achieve supremacy over the other, a struggle from which the United States was to emerge victorious. At the turn of the Nineteenth Century, England was supreme in investments and in effective control of the market in the coveted region. By 1920, the United States had surpassed the British in both directions.

The Anglo-American wrangle in the political field took the form of efforts by the USA to organize a Pan-American Union. An important role in this imperialist scheme was played by James C. Blaine, Secretary of State, who raised the question of a Pan-American conference in 1881. Almost a decade elapsed for the conference to take place. In 1884 a commission set forth by Congress to investigate “the causes of the poor commercial relations between the USA and the South American nations” suggested to Congress to advocate for the upholding of the meeting recommended in 1881. In May 24 1888, Congress passed a resolution authorizing the President to arrange a conference in Washington the following year. The US government elaborated a memorandum that outlined the items to be discussed in the course of the conference. The fundamental points were:

- Measures leading to the formation of an American customs union, leading in every possible and profitable way to the reciprocal commerce among the American nations (...)

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- The adoption by each of the independent American states of a uniform system of customs dispositions that should be observed for the import and export of merchandise and for the payment of port rights and tariffs establishing an equal method in all nations for the classification and appraisal of the merchandise and for the way in which the invoices should be made, as well as identical precepts on sanitary and quarantine matters.
- The adoption of a uniform system of weights and measures and of laws to protect the acquired right under patents or invention privilege and factory marks, and the literary property; thus making the rights of the citizens of all nations respected in all others, (...)
- The adoption of a common silver coin by each of the governments and affordable course in the reciprocal commercial transactions of the citizens of all the States of America.
- An agreement about a definite arbitration plan for all questions or disputes and differences existing or that might arise between the different American States with the aim that all questions and difficulties among such States might end peacefully and avoiding wars, and the recommendation to the respective governments to adopt them.

All of these points evidently had the colonial purpose of facilitating the economic, financial and political penetration of US monopoly corporations in the Latin American nations. Definitely, the Monroe Doctrine was dusted and reinforced. This time it was not a matter of opposing European colonization in America, but of eliminating European, chiefly British influence in the region. The Monroe Doctrine became the cornerstone of the US foreign policy in the American continent. The aim of this conference was not annexation; it was to ensure the industrial dominion of the United States over the young American Republics.

To justify Pan-Americanism, the US government tried to identify its objects with those of the Panama Congress of 1826, led by Simon Bolivar. From the ideological, political, judicial, and social views, both events had different aims. Bolivar's program never contemplated the inclusion of the United States, nor was he the father of US-sponsored Pan-Americanism.

In his epoch, Bolivar was the most outstanding advocate of Latin American unity and stood against every possible form of confederation with the United States. He foresaw the unequal and many times opposed interests between the United States and the Latin American nations. This was plainly expressed by Bolivar when he said that the United States seemed destined by Providence to plague America of miseries in the name of liberty.

The Conference at Washington

The First Pan-American Conference was held from October 2, 1889 to April 19, 1890. Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico did not participate. The Dominican Republic refused to attend the conference because of the disputes regarding the Samana Bay affair. Cuba and Puerto Rico were still Spanish colonies. Sixteen Latin American nations attended the Conference: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Haiti, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru and Uruguay. The total number of delegates was 26, plus 10 representatives of the United States.

Once the Conference was started, the delegates were taken to a tour through cities, factories, institutions, universities, etc. The aim of the tour was to attract the interests of the delegates toward commercial relations with the USA in order to ensure markets for their products in Latin America. In reference to this tour, José Martí stated in a chronicle published in Buenos Aires, in November 8 1889,

El cinco saldrán de viaje de más de un mes los delegados...que no es para decidir, sino para mostrar a los huéspedes la grandeza y esplendidez de las ciudades, y aquella parte de las industrias que se puede enseñar a fin de que se les arraigue la convicción de que es de la conveniencia de sus pueblos comprar lo de éste y no de otros, aunque lo de éste sea más caro, sin ser del todo mejor y aunque para comprar de él hayan de obligarse a no recibir ayuda ni aceptar tratos de otros pueblos del mundo.

Such was Martí's vision even before the opening session of the Conference. Public opinion followed the outcome of the Conference. Europe was especially interested in the event. The Customs Union affair was particularly commented by the press. Pan-Americanism was, thus, "America for the Americans and for nobody else", an amplification of the Monroe Doctrine through different political, judicial, philosophical and social theories of plain aggressive and exploiting essence.

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In the Conference, the Pan-American Union was founded. The new organization was represented by a Bureau at Washington. The Pan-American Union, later reorganized under the name of the Organization of American States (OAS), became an important instrument for the United States in the establishment of US imperialist domination upon Latin America.

The customs union proposed by the United States was not accepted by the Latin American representatives. Martí pointed out the dangers of a customs union on equal terms between the industrialized USA and the less developed Latin American countries. In his chronicle, published by La Nación of Buenos Aires, he wrote,

En cosas de tanto interés, la alarma falsa fuera tan culpable como el disimulo. Ni se ha de exagerar lo que se ve, ni de torcerlo, ni de callarlo. Los peligros no se han de ver cuando se les tiene encima, sino cuando se les puede evitar. Lo primero en política, es aclarar y prever. Sólo una respuesta unánime y viril, para la que todavía hay tiempo sin riesgo, puede libertar de una vez a los pueblos españoles de América de la inquietud y perturbación, fatales en su hora de desarrollo; en que las tendría sin cesar, con la complicidad posible de las repúblicas venales o débiles, la política secular y confesa de predominio de un vecino pujante y ambicioso, que no los ha querido fomentar jamás, ni se ha dirigido a ellos sino para impedir su extensión, como en Panamá, o apoderarse de su territorio, como en México, Nicaragua, Santo Domingo, Haití y Cuba, o para cortar por la intimidación sus tratos con el resto del universo, como en Colombia, o para obligarlos, como ahora, a comprar lo que no pueden vender, y confederarse para su dominio.

(...)

Jamás hubo en América, de la independencia acá, asunto que requiera más sensatez, ni obligue a más vigilancia, ni pida examen más claro y minucioso, que el convite que los Estados Unidos potentes, repletos de productos invendibles, y determinados a extender sus dominios en América, hacen a las naciones americanas de menos poder, ligadas por el comercio libre y útil con los pueblos europeos para ajustar una liga contra Europa, y cerrar tratos con el resto del mundo. De la tiranía de España supo librarse la América española; y ahora, después de ver con ojos judiciales los antecedentes, causas y factores del convite, urge decir, porque es la verdad, que ha llegado para la América española, la hora de declarar su segunda independencia.

Today, new plans of union for the Americas are promoted by the United States. It is important to go again to the chronicles written by José Martí more than a hundred years ago.

American Intervention in the Cuban War for Independence

On February 23 1895, the Cuban people continued their war for liberation from the colonial rule of Spain. This phase of the Cuban Revolution was prepared by José Martí and his Revolutionary Party. Máximo Gómez, Antonio Maceo and Calixto García, the legendary Mambí leaders, were in charge of the conduct of the war. To quell the rebels, Spain sent over its best generals, hundreds of thousands of soldiers and large amounts of war materiel. The Cuban rebels, who never counted more than 40,000 men-at-arms and experienced pressing material necessities, compensated this weakness with the braveness of those who fight for freedom. The tactical ingenuity of the Mambí officers made effective use of flexible guerrilla-like methods.

In January 1896, the Spanish government sent General Valeriano Weyler who soon earned the nickname of "Butcher". Weyler proceeded to ferociously devastate the countryside to deprive the guerrillas from people's support. The peasants were forcibly cornered in concentration camps where they were decimated by starvation and diseases. Although hundreds of thousands died, it only helped increase anti-Spanish resentment. In October 1897, the "Butcher" had to go defeated and Spain sent General Blanco. By then, the ultimate defeat of the Spanish colonists was only a matter of time. As a result of the successful invasion of the western provinces by Maceo and Gómez, the rebellion extended all over the country. The Mambí forces controlled the rural areas and inflicted constant and costly defeats to the decimated and sick-ridden Spanish army. The Crown had no more fresh troops to send to Cuban and the Spanish treasury was exhausted.

While the Cubans carried their arduous war for independence, the American government, following Adam's Doctrine had persistently opposed the Cuban's liberating effort. They backed Spain, in official

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statements and with weapons. American authorities interfered with the efforts that Cubans in immigration made to bring supplies to the rebels. On January 10 1895, three ships loaded with war materiel that Martí and other patriots had prepared for an expedition were confiscated, a heavy blow to the insurrectionists plans. American neutrality was in fact opposed to the independence of Cuba. The policy had been designed by Adams much before: keep the prey in the weakest hands until the right moment.

By 1898, the US government abandoned its “neutrality”. It was obvious that the Spanish forces were at the verge of disaster and the time for Cubans to be free was fast approaching. The fruit was ripe.

During the previous decades, important economic links had been forged between Cuba and the United States. The Cuban staples found their most important market in the United States and US businessmen owned about \$50,000,000 worth of Cuban property, mainly sugar and tobacco plantations and mineral deposits.

The Cuban war for independence had attracted little attention from American newspapers. By 1898, this changed and the press began to be used to prepare public opinion for the war. News of the Spanish atrocities committed against the Cuban people became prominent issues. Special correspondents reported colorful stories that arouse the Americans in favor of intervention. R. Hearst, director of the New York Journal, boasted that he had spent one million dollars in “producing the war.” In early February 1898, Hearst’s journal published a letter (stolen from the Havana post office) written by Dupuy De Lôme, the Spanish Minister to the United States to a friend in Cuba. In the letter, De Lôme characterized President McKinley as “weak and a bidder for the admiration of a crowd, besides being a would-be politician who tries to leave a door open behind himself while keeping on good terms with the jingoes of his party.” Although the Spanish government made De Lôme resign and publicly apologize, the affair gave ground for a vociferous warmongering campaign.

The Maine incident followed in less than a week. The USS battleship Maine had been sent to Havana late in January 1898 “to protect US property and persons”. On February 15, the Maine was sunk by a terrific explosion carried to the bottom 2 officers and 248 members of the crew. Although the Court of Inquiry did not lay the blame on anyone, the incident gave the US government an excuse for a war declaration on the ground that the Maine had been hit by a Spanish submarine mine. The logic of events points rather at some US rabid imperialist circles who might have well resorted to this barbarous crime to provoke the conflict. The American press clamored furiously for war.

On March 27, the State Department cabled a series of demands to Spain demanding an armistice. By April 9, the Spanish government had agreed on everything. McKinley deliberately omitted Spain’s compliance, of which he had been aware for two days, and on April 11 he sent a message to Congress saying that he had “exhausted every effort to relieve the intolerable condition (in Cuba) and invited Congress to take such actions as it saw best.

On April 19 1898, Congress passed the Joint Resolution that declared,

The people of Cuba are and of right ought to be free and independent; that it is the duty of the United States to demand that Spain should give up Cuba and withdraw its forces from the island; that the President is directed and empowered to use all the forces of the United States and so call out the militia in order to carry out these resolutions; that the United States disclaims any intention of control over the said island except for the pacification thereof and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people.

The United States government was determined to make this promise remain on paper only. The document was but a sham to disguise its actual imperialist aims in the eyes of the US people—who were truly in favor of Cuban independence—and world public opinion.

Soon the US battleships began shelling Cuban seaports and cities in Matanzas, Cárdenas, Baracoa, Manzanillo and Santa Cruz del Sur. The bombing of these cities lacked military purposes and only resulted in destructions and death for the civilian population. In the same way, the blockade of the island aggravated the food shortages and the distress of the population.

On April 29, the Spanish fleet, under Admiral Cervera, sailed from Spain and safely reached Santiago de Cuba where it was bottled up by the US fleet. A military expedition was now planned to capture Santiago overland and force Cervera out under the American waiting guns.

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On June 14, an expeditionary force of 17,000 men under General William R. Shafter left Tampa, Florida. Typical of this army was the First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, the Rough Riders, who had no horses.

During the following months, the US government refused to recognize the belligerent Mambí forces. However, they were ready to accept the support of the Cuban guerrillas in the fight. The Cubans, on the other hand, willingly cooperated with the American forces. They trusted the public declarations of the US Congress. General García, in response to a request from General N. Miles, moved his troops to the region near Santiago de Cuba. Those Cuban troops effectively backed the landing of the American troops. The following operations were carried out following a tactical plan prepared by General García. In the bitter combats that followed, the Cubans fought always in the forefront with great courage, making a fundamental contribution to the seizure of Santiago de Cuba. General Miles wrote in The World of the Army as a Whole that the fall of Santiago had been largely the result of the actions of General García and his men.

On July 3, the Spanish fleet tried to escape Santiago Harbor, in a desperate attempt to break through the US blockade and fight their way around to Havana. The US fleet was waiting this move, a serious military blunder. In a fight, which raged for hours along the coast for 50 miles westward from Santiago, the overwhelming US firepower destroyed every one of the Spanish ships and killed one third of their crew.

After Santiago was taken, the Americans restored to power the same Spanish authorities of the city. The Cuban troops were not invited to the ceremony of surrender of the Spanish troops and the Mambí Army was forbidden to enter the city. This was in line with the American policy: no recognition to the Cuban belligerent forces, as if the Mambí Army had not fought gallantly for generations deserving worldwide respect as well as the independence of their country. General García protested with a virile letter to the American General,

Circula el rumor que, por lo absurdo no es digno de crédito general, de que la orden de impedir a mi ejército la entrada a Santiago de Cuba ha obedecido al temor de venganza y represalias contra los españoles. Permítame Ud. Que proteste contra la más ligera sombra de semejante pensamiento, porque no somos un pueblo de salvajes que desconoce los principios de la guerra civilizada: formamos un ejército pobre y harapiento, tan pobre y harapiento como lo fue el ejército de vuestros antepasados en su guerra noble por la independencia de los Estados Unidos de América; pero a semejanza de los héroes de Saratoga y Yorktown respetamos demasiado nuestra causa para mancharla con la barbarie y la cobardía.

After the fall of Santiago de Cuba, General Miles and the forces under his command were sent to Puerto Rico, which was captured on July 26 without any practical resistance. At the time Puerto Rico was seized, about 11,000 US troops landed in the Philippines under General W. Merritt. Supported by Filipino insurrectionists under Emilio Aguinaldo, the US troops took Manila on August 13. During the following months, the Filipinos drafted a constitution and organized a republic under the leadership of Aguinaldo. The Filipinos rejected the cession of their country to the Americans and proclaimed their right to independence. On December 21 1898, President McKinley ordered the War Department to extend the military occupation of Manila to the entire archipelago. This provoked an immediate insurrection of the Filipinos, a war of liberation led by Aguinaldo against the new colonizing power. The conflict lasted three dreadful years and, before it was put down, the US forces resorted to the same concentration camp methods that the Spaniards had used to combat the Cuban rebels.

On August 12 1898, hostilities between the United States and Spain were declared over. The formal meetings for a peace treaty were held in October, in Paris. The Cubans, who had fought for so long and who had made such an important contribution to the defeat of Spain, were ignored and had no representative to the talks. The Treaty of Paris, signed on 1 October 1898, between the United States and Spain stipulated that the Spanish Crown renounced its sovereignty over Cuba, then under American occupation. The Treaty also granted to the United States the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam. The Spanish citizens living in Cuba were granted their full rights and properties. No mention was made of the rights of Cubans, Filipinos or Puerto Ricans.

The American occupation of Cuba lasted until May 20 1902. The US military governor, General Leonard Wood, gave the American companies access to the key sectors of the Cuban economy. Under Wood, the system of corruption and bribery that was to prevail in Cuban politics for decades was inaugurated. The new Cuban government was forced to incorporate into the Cuban constitution the ignominious Platt

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Amendment. This document sanctioned officially the transformation of Cuba into a political appendix of the United States. According to its terms, Cuba could not refuse to sell or lease lands wanted by the United States for naval stations. Until today, the American Army keeps a military base in Guantánamo against the will of the Cubans. The amendment also conditioned Cuba's treaty making powers to the United States approval, as well as the right of the island to borrow money in a third country. Finally, Platt Amendment gave the United States the right to intervene in Cuba at its own discretion "for the protection of life, property and individual liberty", a pretext that has served to justify aggression many times. Before removing their troops, the Americans forced the Cuban government to sign a permanent treaty with the USA reiterating the terms of the Platt Amendment.

Thus Cuba, a formally independent and free republic, actually became a protectorate of the United States. The colonial chains were disguised by the formal existence of a Cuban government and a Cuban constitution. With Cuba, the United States inaugurated what was later to be called neocolonialism.

About the American intervention in the Cuban war for independence, V. I. Lenin wrote that its battlefronts and consequences surpassed the national scales of Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico, and that the United States managed to strip Spain of her last overseas colonial holdings for the establishment of its own colonial empire. So, he considered the American-Spanish War the first imperialist war, a conflict between two imperialist powers for the division of the world.

José Martí did not survive to see the end of the war, but the Cuban apostle was able to foresee the American continental ambitions and the threat that the USA posed to what he called Our America. In a historical letter dated May 18, 1895, a day before he fell in combat, Martí wrote a letter to Manuel Mercado, his Mexican friend, that has been regarded his political will.

(...) Ya estoy todos los días en peligro de dar mi vida por mi país y por mi deber (...) de impedir a tiempo con la independencia de Cuba que se extiendan por las Antillas los Estados Unidos y caigan, con esa fuerza más sobre nuestras tierras de América. Cuanto hice hasta hoy y haré, es para eso. En silencio ha tenido que ser y como indirectamente, porque hay cosas que para lograrlas han de andar ocultas (...) Las mismas obligaciones menores y públicas de los pueblos como ese de Ud. y mío—más vitalmente interesado en impedir que en Cuba se abra, por la anexión de los imperialistas de allá y los españoles, el camino que se ha de segar, y con nuestra sangre estamos segando, de la anexión de los pueblos de nuestra América, al norte revuelto y brutal que nos desprecia (...) Viví en el monstruo, y le conozco las entrañas:—y mi honda es la de David.

The Bick Stick and the Dollar Diplomacy

The expansion of the US Imperialism over our lands of Latin America began in the Caribbean. Here, US expansionism took the forms of economic penetration and military intervention, and was characterized by unrestrained aggressiveness. Since the 1880's, the US companies began to establish their economic interests in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Central America. By the end of the century, the United Fruit Company had the undisputed control of the fundamental agrarian exports of the area, chiefly banana, tobacco and sugar. The exploitation of various mineral deposits had also fallen on the hands of US corporations.

The rapid economic penetration into the Caribbean area was accompanied by an aggressive foreign policy aimed at imposing the American interests upon the republics of the region. After the United States-Spain War, the United States extended its rule to Puerto Rico and Cuba. US imperialists, based on the theory of predetermination set forth by "Manifest Destiny", sought the forceful establishment of what they called "American democracy" upon these countries, and the transformation of the Caribbean Sea into their "American Mediterranean".

Since the early years of the Twentieth Century, the United States started a series of aggressions against the small and weak nations of the region. An openly aggressive foreign policy evolved into a more cautious behavior. However, despite all pretenses of good will, intended to mask actual aims, the imperialist nature of US foreign policy remained the same.

Roosevelt's "Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine

The notoriously aggressive President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) gave a final shape to US' policy toward Latin America. For him US foreign policy should be based on a principle, "Speak soft and carry a big stick". Such aggressive scheme has been the cause of much violence, oppression, misery, and

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bloodshed for the Latin American nations. It is Roosevelt's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine —Known as his "Corollary"— which served his and the following administrations to legitimate many aggressions and interventions upon the Latin American republics. In his message to Congress on December 6 1904, President Roosevelt stated

Chronic wrongdoing (...) may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere, the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, to exercise an international police power.

This statement reflects the essence of policies that have had continuity down to the present. No comment to such declaration is needed. Let any judicious mind, on the bases of the policies followed by the USA in the last one hundred years, draw conclusions.

The Panama Canal Affair

A canal connecting the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans was a necessity to speed up maritime communications in America. In 1850, England and the USA agreed upon a joint plan for the construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. But, by the end of the century, the increasingly powerful United States was determined to have the absolute control of the canal to be built. Consequently, the Anglo-American treaty of 1850 was rejected.

At the time, Panama was one of the states of the Republic of Colombia. The United States claimed for absolute rights over a canal zone six miles wide across the isthmus. This was so flagrantly violating of Colombia's sovereignty that the Colombian Senate rejected the US pretenses.

President Roosevelt, backed by the most rabid expansionists, was determined to have the canal site on whatever terms were necessary. A group of separatists from Panama revolted against the Colombian government and declared Panama an independent republic. Several days *before* the insurrection, on October 30 1903, the USS Nashville was ordered to seize the Panama railroad and to prevent the landing of Colombian armed forces, which in this way were cut off from the rebellious area. Under the protection of US marines, the republic of Panama was set up and immediately recognized by Washington.

On November 18, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty was signed. It granted the United States the perpetual use and control of a canal zone of 10 miles wide across the Isthmus of Panama, as well as full US sovereignty over this area—including the right of fortification. The treaty was subject of debate in Congress. In his peculiarly aggressive way, President T. Roosevelt later declared, "I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate; and while the debate goes on the canal does also".

The seizure of Panama and the establishment of a puppet republic there to build a canal there were one of the many interventions of the Roosevelt Administration in Latin America. As a piece of evidence: From 1906 to 1909, the second US intervention in Cuba took place. In 1907, the United States intervened in the Dominican Republic and made it a US financial protectorate. In this very year the Central American republics were imposed the so-called "treaties of peace and friendship", which fostered their dependence upon the USA.

5. The United States in the First World War

The First World War broke out in August 1914. It was an imperialist war of plunder, an unjust war of conquest carried out by the great imperialist powers for a new division of the already partitioned world. By the turn of the Nineteenth Century, the division of the world into colonies and spheres of influence among the imperialist powers had been concluded. There were three areas of highly developed capitalism: the Central European (headed by Germany), the British, and the North American (United States) areas.

These countries had arrived at the imperialist stage through different roads: The United States began with the concentration of production and capital to establish an internal monopoly. Its appearance as a colonial power and an exporter of capital only took place after the war on Spain in 1898. Germany tried to control the world market and developed monopoly production in the form of state capitalism. Great Britain started with its violent colonial expansion and the export of capital, passing to the monopoly phase in a slow and irregular way.

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During the pre-war period the development of productive forces, especially the growth of the coal and iron industries, had been much more rapid in Germany than in England. Because of this progress, Germany became more powerful than Great Britain, both industrially and militarily. However, by this time Great Britain possessed most of the world's colonies. Lenin pointed out that Great Britain "in 1914 held 335,000,000 square kilometers of colonial territory as against 17,400,000 for Russia, 10,000,000 for France, 2,900,000 for Germany and 300,000 for the United States"-

The disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on one side and the division of colonies and spheres of influence for finance capital on the other could only be solved by means of war. As Foster writes,

"...in the spirit characteristic of imperialist piracy the profit-hungry German capitalists could not tolerate a situation wherein Great Britain held such immense colonies and Germany so few. They too wanted their place in the Sun, as they expressed it. So the world had to be redivided to suit them. The fact that many millions of people would perish in the barbaric process weighed nothing in the minds of the German imperialists any more than it did in those of their also guilty British imperialist counterparts. Before the war finally came to a head, it had been brewing for about ten years; in quarrels over North Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, the Dardanelles, and other key areas, as Europe teetered from one political crisis to another".

At the close of the 19th century the lining up of the rival forces in Europe was accomplished, so two contending groups were formed: the Triple Alliance (also called the Central Powers) composed by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. The Triple Entente constituted by France, Russia and Great Britain. Each sought to expand at the expense of the other and began to arm heavily —both blocs doubled the size of their armies in the period from 1899 to 1914. From the policies they were pursuing, war was the inevitable outcome.

During the course of the war the different capitalist countries lined up either on the Entente, that is, Russia, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Rumania, Serbia, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, and later on, the United States and some Latin American States. Or on the side of the Central Powers; Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. The colonies of the warring powers in Asia, Africa, and Australia also joined the war. In this way, the war acquired a gigantic scale covering almost the whole globe.

The United States did not enter the war until April 6, 1917. Foster states that there were two reasons for this delay. First, the opposition of the peace-loving people of the United States to participate in the brutal struggle and, second, that it was better for the United States capitalists, from the financial point of view, to stay out of the war and sell war materiel to the warring powers.

When the war broke out, American economy was in a depression, but soon the government's policy of "neutrality" brought an economic revival. Industry revived because of huge orders of munitions and general war supplies. The United States, formerly a debtor nation, now became a creditor. The years of war meant an excellent opportunity for the United States. Very important economic links with the allies were forged and the center of world finance shifted from London to New York.

Apart from financial interests, the US monopoly bourgeoisie was interested in the preservation of the existing "balance" as they could obtain no profits or advantages from a new division of the world. The policy of neutrality was dictated by United States imperialist interests and objective possibilities; while its capitalist rivals fought among themselves, the USA profited from the sale of the war materiel.

This "neutrality" could not last forever. During the third year of the war, the existing equilibrium was seriously endangered. Some analysts believe that the Americans would rather have Great Britain as a victor. While British imperialism had become increasingly parasitic and less competitive, the young, aggressive, and rapidly growing German imperialism was an ominous potential enemy.

Serious reasons moved the USA to enter the war. By 1918, the war seemed to favor a German victory. If the Allies were defeated, American bankers would lose the nine billion dollars in loans the British and the French owed them. The defeat of the Allies and the destruction of their economies meant bankruptcy for the United States financial interests. Many Americans later pointed out that the war was fought to assure the safety of bankers and munitions makers' profits.

By 1917, an explosive social situation developed in Europe because of the war. There was widespread popular discontent and riots broke out everywhere. European workers went to strike demanding

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higher wages and the end of the war. There were mutinies in the armies and navies of the contending nations. In March 1917, revolution broke out in Russia. This meant its eventual withdrawal from the battlefield and the possibility for Germany to remove part of her troops from the Eastern Front to reinforce her troops in the Western Front. Undoubtedly, the Russian Revolution was a serious stroke to the Allies. Besides, since 1916, the Germans had intensified their submarine warfare. All this represented a serious threat to the Allies.

The United States, for about a century engaged in an aggressive expansion, went to the war looking for spheres of influence. US monopoly capitalists sought to widen their markets and their sources of raw material at the expense of the other imperialist powers. Like the European imperialist nations, the United States desired a share in the division of the spoils.

In 1915, England intensified its naval blockade around the Central Powers. It was to counter the blockade that the Germans began the first submarine campaign. They set up a war area around the British Isles in which all enemy ships were to be destroyed without warning, and in which, it was clear, "neutral" vessels would not be safe. Up to then trade between the United States and the Allies had developed undisturbed, now German submarines threatened to put an end to this highly profitable business.

President Thomas Woodrow Wilson, (1913-1921) sent notes of protest to the Germans, who, trying to avoid a conflict with the United States in such a moment, restricted the use of their most powerful maritime weapon. Nevertheless, in January 1917, the German government announced that German submarines would again be used to sink all vessels in sight, armed or unarmed, within a specific zone around the British Isles and the Mediterranean. The Germans reasoned that the United States was already in the war against them, economically. They hoped they could defeat England before the United States could get its military forces to the battlefield. German submarine warfare dealt a deathblow to the profitable trade with the Allies and removed an important reason for the United States to remain "neutral". On the other hand, the death of several US civilians because of submarine raids helped prepare the ground for warmongering propaganda to raise public opinion in favor of the entrance of the United States in the conflict.

When Germany resumed submarine warfare, the United States broke diplomatic relations and began preparations for war. In the meantime, a blunder of German diplomacy gave President Wilson a nice pretext for the war declaration. At the beginning of March 1917, the British naval intelligence intercepted coded message from the German foreign secretary, Zimmerman, to the German ambassador in Mexico. The Ambassador was instructed to propose Mexico that in the event of a war between the United States and Germany the Mexicans and the Germans should make an alliance and wage war together, and then, Germany should support Mexico in an effort to recover "the lost territories—in Texas, New Mexican and California".

The message was published and provided good grounds for the declaration of war, in April, 1917. The preparations for the great struggle began at once. In August 1918, Congress enacted the draft law declaring that the national army was to be chosen from among all males between the ages of 18 and 45, raising the army to a force of 5,000,000 men. Billions of dollars for war expenses were voted by Congress; to raise this money heavy taxes were laid on the profits of industries and personal income on liquor, tobacco automobiles, mortgages and many other things: These taxes covered about one third of the war expenditures. The rest was obtained from the sale of bonds that were offered directly to the public in the form of Liberty Loans and war-saving stamps.

It was necessary to solve the problems of communication and transportation, so the government took over the express companies, railroads, the telegraph, and telephone companies. Every shipyard was brought into government service and German ships in US ports were seized. A great navy was built in 200 shipyards.

In order to furnish the needed supplies to the troops, the distribution of food and fuel was controlled by the government. The President authorized the seizing and operation of factories, mines and packinghouses, the control of the marketing of foodstuffs and the fixing of the prices of wheat, coal and coke, and of the supplies for military purposes.

Acts and opinions of private citizens were also controlled. By two laws, in 1917 and 1918, heavy penalties on those who tried to aid the enemy or interfere with the work of the military authorities were provided. The Sedition Act (1918) laid fines and imprisonment for the use of condemnatory language about the government or the institutions of the country. These laws were strictly enforced against socialists who stood against the war, inasmuch as they understood its real character.

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In this declaration of war, President Wilson had stated that the principle of the United States in the war was that "the world must be safe for democracy". The peoples of the world did not have to wait long to see what was hidden behind these words.

Military exhaustion and economic crises grew in the belligerent nations as the destructive war proceeded. Rising popular discontent resulted in huge strikes, demonstrations, and protests all over Europe. The working masses grew increasingly aware of the reactionary and imperialist character of the war in which they shed their blood; the momentary "truce" between the workers and the bourgeoisie ended.

Although the ending of the war had released a number of divisions for the Eastern front, the appearance of the North American troops (which began to arrive at the rate of 30,000 a month) put an end to the numerical superiority of the Germans. By August, the German armies had been driven position after position and the threat of an invasion from the south was imminent. Turkey and Austria, in their turn, gave up the struggle in the early days of November 9 the Kaiser abdicated and two days later Armistice was signed.

6. World War II

World War II, or the **Second World War** (often abbreviated **WWII** or **WW2**), was a global military conflict lasting from 1939 to 1945 which involved most of the world's nations, including all of the great powers, organised into two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis. It was the most widespread war in history, with more than 100 million military personnel mobilised. In a state of "total war," the major participants placed their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities at the service of the war effort, erasing the distinction between civilian and military resources. Marked by significant action against civilians, including the Holocaust and the only use of nuclear weapons in warfare, it was the deadliest conflict in human history with over seventy million casualties.

The war is generally considered to have begun on 1 September 1939, with the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany and subsequent declarations of war on Germany by France and most of the countries of the British Empire and Commonwealth. Many countries were already at war by this date, such as Ethiopia and Italy in the Second Italo-Abyssinian War and China and Japan in the Second Sino-Japanese War. Many that were not initially involved joined the war later in response to events such as the German invasion of the Soviet Union and the Japanese attacks on the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and on British overseas colonies, which triggered declarations of war on Japan by the United States, the British Commonwealth, and the Netherlands.

The war ended with the victory of the Allies in 1945, leaving the political alignment and social structure of the world significantly changed. While the United Nations was established to foster international cooperation and prevent future conflicts, the Soviet Union and the United States emerged as rival superpowers, setting the stage for the Cold War, which lasted for the next forty-six years. Meanwhile, the acceptance of the principle of self-determination accelerated decolonization movements in Asia and Africa, while Western Europe began moving toward economic recovery and increased political integration.

Chronology

The start of the war is generally held to be 1 September 1939 beginning with the German invasion of Poland; Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later. Other dates for the beginning of war include the Japanese invasion of Manchuria on 13 September 1931; the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War on 7 July 1937; or one of several other events.

Others follow A. J. P. Taylor, who held that there was a simultaneous Sino-Japanese War in East Asia, and a Second European War in Europe and her colonies. The two wars merged in 1941, becoming a single global conflict, at which point the war continued until 1945. This article uses the conventional dating.

The exact date of the war's end is not universally agreed upon. It has been suggested that the war ended at the armistice of 14 August 1945 (V-J Day), rather than the formal surrender of Japan (2 September 1945); in some European histories, it ended on V-E Day (8 May 1945). The Treaty of Peace with Japan was not signed until 1951.

Background

World War I radically altered the diplomatic and political situations in Eurasia and Africa with the defeat of the Central Powers, including Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire; and the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia in 1917. Meanwhile the success of the Allied Entente powers including the United

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Kingdom, France, the United States, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Romania and the creation of new states from the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the Russian Empire resulted in a major shift in the balance of power in Europe. In the aftermath of the war, major unrest in Europe rose, especially irredentist and revanchist nationalism and class conflict. Irredentism and revanchism was strong in Germany, which was forced to accept significant territorial, colonial, and financial losses as part of the Treaty of Versailles. Under the treaty, Germany lost around 13 percent of its home territory and all of its overseas colonies, while German annexation of other states was prohibited, massive reparations were imposed, and limits were placed on the size and capability of Germany's armed forces. Meanwhile, the Russian Civil War had led to the creation of the Soviet Union. After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin seized power in the USSR and repudiated the New Economic Policy, favouring the Five Year Plans instead.

In the interwar period, domestic civil conflict occurred in Germany involving nationalists and reactionaries versus communists and moderate democratic political parties. A similar scenario occurred in Italy. Although Italy as an Entente ally made some territorial gains, Italian nationalists were angered that the terms of the Treaty of London, upon which Italy had agreed to wage war on the Central Powers, were not fulfilled with the peace settlement. From 1922 to 1925, the Italian Fascist movement led by Benito Mussolini seized power in Italy with a nationalist, totalitarian, and class collaborationist agenda that abolished representative democracy, repressed political forces supporting class conflict or liberalism, and pursued an aggressive foreign policy aimed at forcefully forging Italy as a world power, and promising to create a "New Roman Empire." Fascism became internationally popular amongst people disillusioned with democratic government, liberalism, and class conflict. In Germany, the Nazi Party led by Adolf Hitler pursued establishing such a fascist government in Germany. With the onset of the Great Depression, Nazi support rose, and, in 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany, and in the aftermath of the Reichstag fire, Hitler created a totalitarian single-party state led by the Nazis.

The Kuomintang (KMT) party in China launched a unification campaign against regional warlords and nominally unified China in the mid-1920s, but was soon embroiled in a civil war against its former Chinese communist allies. In 1931, an increasingly militaristic Japanese Empire, which had long sought influence in China as the first step of its right to rule Asia, used the Mukden Incident as justification to invade Manchuria and established the puppet state of Manchukuo. Too weak to resist Japan, China appealed to the League of Nations for help. Japan withdrew from the League of Nations after being condemned for its incursion into Manchuria. The two nations then fought several minor conflicts, in Shanghai, Rehe and Hebei, until signing the Tanggu Truce in 1933. Thereafter, Chinese volunteer forces continued the resistance to Japanese aggression in Manchuria, and Chahar and Suiyuan.



Adolf Hitler (right) and Benito Mussolini (left)

Adolf Hitler, after an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the German government in 1923, became the Chancellor of Germany in 1933. He abolished democracy, espousing a radical, racially-motivated revision of the world order, and soon began a massive rearmament campaign. Meanwhile, France, to secure its alliance, allowed Italy a free hand in Ethiopia, which Italy desired as a colonial possession. The situation was

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aggravated in early 1935 when the Saarland was legally reunited with Germany and Hitler repudiated the Treaty of Versailles, speeding up his rearmament programme and introducing conscription.

Hoping to contain Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy formed the Stresa Front. The Soviet Union, concerned due to Germany's goals of capturing vast areas of eastern Europe, wrote a treaty of mutual assistance with France. Before taking effect though, the Franco-Soviet pact was required to go through the bureaucracy of the League of Nations, which rendered it essentially toothless. However, in June 1935, the United Kingdom made an independent naval agreement with Germany, easing prior restrictions. The United States, concerned with events in Europe and Asia, passed the Neutrality Act in August. In October, Italy invaded Ethiopia, with Germany the only major European nation supporting the invasion. Italy then revoked objections to Germany's goal of absorbing Austria.

Hitler defied the Versailles and Locarno treaties by remilitarizing the Rhineland in March 1936. He received little response from other European powers. When the Spanish Civil War broke out in July, Hitler and Mussolini supported fascist Generalissimo Francisco Franco's nationalist forces in his civil war against the Soviet-supported Spanish Republic. Both sides used the conflict to test new weapons and methods of warfare, and the nationalists won the war in early 1939. Mounting tensions led to several efforts to strengthen or consolidate power. In October 1936, Germany and Italy formed the Rome-Berlin Axis. A month later, Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, which Italy would join in the following year. In China, after the Xian Incident the Kuomintang and communist forces agreed on a ceasefire in order to present a united front to oppose Japan.

Pre-war events

Invasion of Ethiopia

The Second Italo-Abyssinian War was a brief colonial war that began in October 1935 and ended in May 1936. The war was fought between the armed forces of the Kingdom of Italy (*Regno d'Italia*) and the armed forces of the Ethiopian Empire (also known as Abyssinia). The war resulted in the military occupation of Ethiopia and its annexation into the newly created colony of Italian East Africa (*Africa Orientale Italiana*, or AOI); in addition, it exposed the weakness of the League of Nations as a force to preserve peace. Both Italy and Ethiopia were member nations, but the League did nothing when the former clearly violated the League's own Article X.

Japanese invasion of China



A Chinese machine gun nest in the Battle of Shanghai, 1937.

In July 1937, Japan captured the former Chinese imperial capital of Beiping after instigating the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which culminated in the Japanese campaign to invade all of China. The Soviets quickly signed a non-aggression pact with China to lend materiel support, effectively ending China's prior cooperation with Germany. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek deployed his best army to defend Shanghai, but after 3 months of fighting Shanghai fell. The Japanese continued to push the Chinese forces back, capturing the capital Nanjing in December 1937 and committed the Nanking Massacre.

In June 1938, Chinese forces stalled the Japanese advance by flooding the Yellow River; although this manoeuvre bought time for the Chinese to prepare their defences at Wuhan, the city was taken by October. However, Japanese military victories did not bring about the collapse of Chinese resistance that Japan had hoped to achieve, instead the Chinese government relocated inland to Chongqing to continue their resistance.

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Japanese invasion of the USSR and Mongolia



Soviet troops fought the Japanese during the Battle of Khalkin Gol in Mongolia, 1939.

On 29 July 1938, the Japanese invaded the USSR and were checked at the Battle of Lake Khasan. Although the battle was a Soviet victory, the Japanese dismissed it as an inconclusive draw, and on 11 May 1939 decided to move the Japanese-Mongolian border up to the Khalkin Gol River by force. After initial successes the Japanese assault on Mongolia was checked by the Red Army that inflicted the first major defeat on the Japanese Kwangtung Army.

These clashes convinced the Japanese government that they should focus on conciliating the Soviet government to avoid interference in the war against China and instead turn their military attention southward, towards the US and European holdings in the Pacific. They also prevented the sacking of experienced Soviet military leaders such as Zhukov, who would later play a vital role in the defence of Moscow.

European occupations and agreements



From left to right (front): Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, Mussolini, and Ciano pictured before signing the Munich Agreement.

In Europe, Germany and Italy were becoming bolder. In March 1938, Germany annexed Austria, again provoking little response from other European powers. Encouraged, Hitler began pressing German claims on the Sudetenland, an area of Czechoslovakia with a predominantly ethnic German population; and soon France and Britain conceded this territory to him, against the wishes of the Czechoslovak government, in exchange for a promise of no further territorial demands. Soon after that, however, Germany and Italy forced Czechoslovakia to cede additional territory to Hungary and Poland. In March 1939, Germany invaded the remainder of Czechoslovakia and subsequently split it into the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the pro-German client state, the Slovak Republic.

Alarmed, and with Hitler making further demands on Danzig, France and Britain guaranteed their support for Polish independence; when Italy conquered Albania in April 1939, the same guarantee was extended to Romania and Greece. Shortly after the Franco-British pledge to Poland, Germany and Italy formalised their own alliance with the Pact of Steel.

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In August 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, a non-aggression treaty with a secret protocol. The parties gave each other rights, “in the event of a territorial and political rearrangement,” to “spheres of influence” (western Poland and Lithuania for Germany, and eastern Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Bessarabia for the USSR). It also raised the question of continuing Polish independence.

Course of the war

On 1 September 1939, Germany and Slovakia — a client state in 1939 — attacked Poland. On 3 September 1939 after Germany failed to withdraw in accordance with French and British demands, France and Britain, followed by the countries of the Commonwealth, declared war on Germany but provided little military support to Poland other than a small French attack into the Saarland. On 17 September 1939, after signing an armistice with Japan, the Soviets launched their own invasion of Poland. By early October, Poland was divided among Germany, the Soviet Union, Lithuania and Slovakia, although Poland never officially surrendered and continued the fight outside its borders. At the same time as the battle in Poland, Japan launched its first attack against Changsha, a strategically important Chinese city, but was repulsed by late September.

Common parade of German Wehrmacht and Soviet Red Army on 23 September 1939 in Brest, Eastern Poland at the end of the Invasion of Poland. At centre is Major General Heinz Guderian and at right is Brigadier Semyon Krivoshein.

Following the invasion of Poland and a German-Soviet treaty governing Lithuania, the Soviet Union forced the Baltic countries to allow it to station Soviet troops in their countries under pacts of "mutual assistance." Finland rejected territorial demands and was invaded by the Soviet Union in November 1939. The resulting conflict ended in March 1940 with Finnish concessions. France and the United Kingdom, treating the Soviet attack on Finland as tantamount to entering the war on the side of the Germans, responded to the Soviet invasion by supporting the USSR's expulsion from the League of Nations. In June 1940, the Soviet Armed Forces invaded and occupied the neutral Baltic States.

In Western Europe, British troops deployed to the Continent, but in a phase nicknamed the Phoney War by the British and "Sitzkrieg" (*sitting war*) by the Germans, neither side launched major operations against the other until April 1940. The Soviet Union and Germany entered a trade pact in February of 1940, pursuant to which the Soviets received German military and industrial equipment in exchange for supplying raw materials to Germany to help circumvent a British blockade.

In April 1940, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway to secure shipments of iron ore from Sweden, which the Allies would try to disrupt. Denmark immediately capitulated, and despite Allied support, Norway was conquered within two months. British discontent over the Norwegian campaign led to the replacement of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain by Winston Churchill on 10 May 1940.

The war becomes global

On 22 June 1941, Germany, along with other European Axis members and Finland, invaded the Soviet Union in Operation Barbarossa. The primary targets of this surprise offensive were the Baltic region, Moscow, and Ukraine, with an ultimate goal of ending the 1941 campaign near the Arkhangelsk-Astrakhan line, connecting the Caspian and White Seas. Hitler's objectives were to eliminate the Soviet Union as a military power, exterminate Communism, generate *Lebensraum* ("living space") by dispossessing the native population and guarantee access to the strategic resources needed to defeat Germany's remaining rivals.

Although the Red Army was preparing for strategic counter-offensives before the war, *Barbarossa* forced the Soviet supreme command to adopt a strategic defence. During the summer, the Axis made significant gains into Soviet territory, inflicting immense losses in both personnel and materiel. By the middle of August, however, the German Army High Command decided to suspend the offensive of a considerably depleted Army Group Centre, and to divert the Second Panzer Group to reinforce troops advancing toward central Ukraine and Leningrad. The Kiev offensive was overwhelmingly successful, resulting in encirclement and elimination of four Soviet armies, and made further advance into Crimea and industrially developed Eastern Ukraine (the First Battle of Kharkov) possible.

The diversion of three quarters of the Axis troops and the majority of their air forces from France and the central Mediterranean to the Eastern Front prompted the United Kingdom to reconsider its grand strategy. In July, the UK and the Soviet Union formed a military alliance against Germany and jointly invaded Iran

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shortly afterwards to secure the Persian Corridor and Iran's oilfields. In August, the United Kingdom and the United States jointly issued the Atlantic Charter.

By October, when Axis operational objectives in Ukraine and the Baltic region were achieved, with only the sieges of Leningrad and Sevastopol continuing, a major offensive against Moscow had been renewed. After two months of fierce battles, the German army almost reached the outer suburbs of Moscow, where the exhausted troops were forced to suspend their offensive. Large territorial gains were made by Axis forces, but their campaign had failed to achieve its main objectives: two key cities remained in Soviet hands, the Soviet capability to resist was not broken, and the Soviet Union retained a considerable part of its military potential. The *blitzkrieg* phase of the war in Europe had ended.

By early December, freshly mobilised reserves allowed the Soviets to achieve numerical parity with Axis troops. This, as well as intelligence data that established a minimal number of Soviet troops in the East sufficient to prevent any attack by the Japanese Kwantung Army, allowed the Soviets to begin a massive counter-offensive that started on 5 December along a 1,000 kilometres (620 mi) front and pushed German troops 100–250 kilometres (62–160 mi) west.

German successes in Europe encouraged Japan to increase pressure on European governments in south-east Asia. The Dutch government agreed to provide Japan oil supplies from the Dutch East Indies, while refusing to hand over political control of the colonies. Vichy France, by contrast, agreed to a Japanese occupation of French Indochina. The United States, United Kingdom, and other Western governments reacted to the seizure of Indochina with a freeze on Japanese assets, while the United States (which supplied 80 percent of Japan's

oil) responded by placing a complete oil embargo. The seizure meant Japan was essentially forced to choose between abandoning its ambitions in Asia and the prosecution of the war against China, or seizing the natural resources it needed by force; the Japanese military did not consider the former an option, and many officers considered the oil embargo an unspoken declaration of war.

Japan planned to rapidly seize European colonies in Asia to create a large defensive perimeter stretching into the Central Pacific; the Japanese would then be free to exploit the resources of Southeast Asia while exhausting the over-stretched Allies by fighting a defensive war. To prevent American intervention while securing the perimeter it was further planned to neutralise the United States Pacific Fleet from the outset. On 7 December (8 December in Asian time zones), 1941, Japan attacked British and American holdings with near-simultaneous offensives against Southeast Asia and the Central Pacific. These included an attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, landings in Thailand and Malaya and the battle of Hong Kong

These attacks prompted the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, other Western Allies, and China (already fighting the Second Sino-Japanese War), to formally declare war on Japan. Germany and the other members of the Tripartite Pact responded by declaring war on the United States. In January, the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, China, and 22 smaller or exiled governments issued the Declaration by United Nations, which affirmed the Atlantic Charter. The Soviet Union did not adhere to the declaration; it maintained a neutrality agreement with Japan, and exempted itself from the principle of self-determination.

Meanwhile, by the end of April 1942, Japan had almost fully conquered Burma, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, Singapore, and Rabaul, inflicting severe losses on Allied troops and taking a large number of prisoners. Despite a stubborn resistance in Corregidor, the Philippines was eventually captured in May 1942, forcing the government of the Philippine Commonwealth into exile. Japanese forces also achieved naval victories in the South China Sea, Java Sea and Indian Ocean and bombed the Allied naval base at Darwin, Australia. The only real Allied success against Japan was a Chinese victory at Changsha in early January 1942. These easy victories over unprepared opponents left Japan overconfident, as well as overextended.

Germany retained the initiative as well. Exploiting dubious American naval command decisions, the German navy ravaged Allied shipping off the American Atlantic coast. Despite considerable losses, European Axis members stopped a major Soviet offensive in Central and Southern Russia, keeping most territorial gains they achieved during the previous year. In North Africa, the Germans launched an offensive in January, pushing the British back to positions at the Gazala Line by early February, followed by a temporary lull in combat which Germany used to prepare for their upcoming offensives.

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Axis collapse, Allied victory

On 16 December 1944, Germany attempted its last desperate measure for success on the Western Front by marshalling German reserves to launch a massive counter-offensive in the Ardennes to attempt to split the Western Allies, encircle large portions of Western Allied troops and capture their primary supply port at Antwerp in order to prompt a political settlement. By January, the offensive had been repulsed with no strategic objectives fulfilled. In Italy, the Western Allies remained stalemated at the German defensive line. In mid-January 1945, the Soviets attacked in Poland, pushing from the Vistula to the Oder river in Germany, and overran East Prussia. On 4 February, U.S., British, and Soviet leaders met in Yalta. They agreed on the occupation of post-war Germany, and when the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan.

In February, the Soviets invaded Silesia and Pomerania, while Western Allied forces entered Western Germany and closed to the Rhine river. In March, the Western Allies crossed the Rhine north and south of the Ruhr, encircling a large number of German troops, while the Soviets advanced to Vienna. In early April, the Western Allies finally pushed forward in Italy and swept across Western Germany, while Soviet forces stormed Berlin in late April; the two forces linked up on Elbe river on 25 April. On 30 April 1945, the Reichstag was captured, signalling the military defeat of Third Reich.

Several changes in leadership occurred during this period. On 12 April, U.S. President Roosevelt died and was succeeded by Harry Truman. Benito Mussolini was killed by Italian partisans on 28 April. Two days later, Hitler committed suicide, and was succeeded by Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz.

German forces surrendered in Italy on 29 April and in Western Europe on 7 May. On the Eastern Front, Germany surrendered to the Soviets on 8 May. A German Army Group Centre resisted in Prague until 11 May.

In the Pacific theatre, American forces accompanied by the forces of the Philippine Commonwealth advanced in the Philippines, clearing Leyte by the end of April 1945. They landed on Luzon in January 1945 and seized Manila in March, leaving it in ruins. Fighting continued on Luzon, Mindanao and other islands of the Philippines until the end of the war. In May 1945, Australian troops landed on Borneo, overrunning the oilfields there. British, American and Chinese forces defeated the Japanese in northern Burma in March, and the British pushed on to reach Rangoon by 3 May. American forces also moved toward Japan, taking Iwo Jima by March, and Okinawa by the end of June. American bombers destroyed Japanese cities, and American submarines cut off Japanese imports.

On 11 July, the Allied leaders met in Potsdam, Germany. They confirmed earlier agreements about Germany, and reiterated the demand for unconditional surrender of all Japanese forces by Japan, specifically stating that "the alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction". During this conference the United Kingdom held its general election, and Clement Attlee replaced Churchill as Prime Minister. When Japan continued to reject the Potsdam terms, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August. Between the two bombs, the Soviets, pursuant to the Yalta agreement, invaded Japanese-held Manchuria, and quickly defeated the Kwantung Army, which was the primary Japanese fighting force. The Red Army also captured Sakhalin Island and the Kurile Islands. On 15 August 1945 Japan surrendered, with the surrender documents finally signed aboard the deck of the American battleship USS *Missouri* on 2 September 1945, ending the war.

Aftermath

In an effort to maintain international peace, the Allies formed the United Nations, which officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, and adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, as a common standard of achievement for all member nations.

The alliance between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union had begun to deteriorate even before the war was over, and the powers each quickly established their own spheres of influence. In Europe, the continent was essentially divided between Western and Soviet spheres by the Iron Curtain which ran through and partitioned Allied occupied Germany and occupied Austria. The Soviet Union created the Eastern Bloc by directly annexing several countries it occupied as Soviet Socialist Republics that were originally effectively ceded to it by Germany in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, such as Eastern Poland, the three Baltic countries, part of eastern Finland and northeastern Romania.

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Other states that the Soviets occupied at the end of the war were converted into Soviet Satellite states, such as the People's Republic of Poland, the People's Republic of Hungary, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Romania, the People's Republic of Albania, and later East Germany from the Soviet zone of German occupation.

In Asia, the United States occupied Japan and administrated Japan's former islands in the Western Pacific, while the Soviets annexed Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands; the former Japanese-governed Korea was divided and occupied between the two powers. Mounting tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union soon evolved into the formation of the American-led NATO and the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact military alliances and the start of the Cold War between them.

Soon after the end of World War II, conflict flared again in many parts of the world. In China, nationalist and communist forces quickly resumed their civil war. Communist forces were eventually victorious and established the People's Republic of China on the mainland, while nationalist forces ended up retreating to Taiwan. In Greece, civil war broke out between Anglo-American supported royalist forces and communist forces, with the royalist forces victorious.

Soon after these conflicts ended, North Korea invaded South Korea, which was backed by the United Nations, while North Korea was backed by the Soviet Union and China. The war resulted in essentially a stalemate and ceasefire, after which North Korean leader Kim Il Sung created a highly centralized and brutal dictatorship, according himself unlimited power and generating a formidable cult of personality.

Following the end of the war, a rapid period of decolonization also took place within the holdings of the various European colonial powers. These primarily occurred due to shifts in ideology, the economic exhaustion from the war and increased demand by indigenous people for self-determination. For the most part, these transitions happened relatively peacefully, though notable exceptions occurred in countries such as Indochina, Madagascar, Indonesia and Algeria. In many regions, divisions, usually for ethnic or religious reasons, occurred following European withdrawal. This was seen prominently in the Mandate of Palestine, leading to the creation of Israel, and in India, resulting in the creation of the Dominion of India and the Dominion of Pakistan.

Economic recovery following the war was varied in differing parts of the world, though in general it was quite positive. In Europe, West Germany recovered quickly and doubled production from its pre-war levels by the 1950s. Italy came out of the war in poor economic condition, but by 1950s, the Italian economy was marked by stability and high growth. The United Kingdom was in a state of economic ruin after the war, and continued to experience relative economic decline for decades to follow.

France rebounded quickly, and enjoyed rapid economic growth and modernization. The Soviet Union also experienced a rapid increase in production in the immediate post-war era. In Asia, Japan experienced incredibly rapid economic growth, becoming one of the most powerful economies in the world by the 1980s.

China, following the conclusion of its civil war, was essentially a bankrupt nation. By 1953, economic restoration seemed fairly successful as production had resumed pre-war levels. This growth rate mostly persisted, though it was briefly interrupted by the disastrous Great Leap Forward economic experiment. At the end of the war, the United States produced roughly half of the world's industrial output; by the early 1970s though, this dominance had lessened significantly.

Impact

Casualties and war crimes

Estimates for the total casualties of the war vary, due to the fact that many deaths went unrecorded. Most suggest that some 60 million people died in the war, including about 20 million soldiers and 40 million civilians. Many civilians died because of disease, starvation, massacres, bombing and deliberate genocide. The Soviet Union lost around 27 million people during the war, almost half of all World War II deaths.

Of the total deaths in World War II, approximately 85 percent were on the Allied side (mostly Soviet and Chinese) and 15 percent were on the Axis side. One estimate is that 12 million civilians died in Nazi

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concentration camps, 1.5 million by bombs, 7 million in Europe from other causes, and 7.5 million in China from other causes.

Many of these deaths were a result of genocidal actions committed in Axis-occupied territories and other war crimes committed by German as well as Japanese forces. The most notorious of German atrocities was The Holocaust, the systematic genocide of Jews in territories controlled by Germany and its allies.

The Nazis also targeted other groups, including the Roma (targeted in the Porajmos), Slavs, and gay men, exterminating an estimated five million additional people. The targets of the Axis-aligned Croatian Ustaše regime were mostly Serbs.

The most well-known Japanese atrocity was the Nanking Massacre, in which several hundred thousand Chinese civilians were raped and murdered. The Japanese military murdered from nearly 3 million to over 10 million civilians, mostly Chinese. Mitsuyoshi Himeta reported 2.7 million casualties occurred during the *Sankō Sakusen*. General Yasuji Okamura implemented the policy in Heipei and Shantung.

The Axis forces employed limited biological and chemical weapons. The Italians used mustard gas during their conquest of Abyssinia, while the Japanese Imperial Army used a variety of such weapons during their invasion and occupation of China (see *Unit 731*) and in early conflicts against the Soviets. Both the Germans and Japanese tested such weapons against civilians and, in some cases, on prisoners of war. While many of the Axis's acts were brought to trial in the world's first international tribunals, incidents caused by the Allies were not. Examples of such Allied actions include population transfer in the Soviet Union, the Soviet forced labour camps (Gulag), Japanese American internment in the United States, the Operation Keelhaul, , Rape during the occupation of Japan mostly by US soldiers, expulsion of Germans after World War II, mass rape of German women by Soviet Red Army, the Soviet massacre of Polish citizens and the mass-bombing of civilian areas in enemy territory, including Tokyo and most notably at Dresden. Large numbers of famine deaths can also be partially attributed to the war, such as the Bengal famine of 1943 and the Vietnamese famine of 1944–45.

Concentration camps and slave work

The Nazis were responsible for The Holocaust, the killing of approximately six million Jews (overwhelmingly Ashkenazim), as well as two million ethnic Poles and four million others who were deemed "unworthy of life" (including the disabled and mentally ill, Soviet POWs, homosexuals, Freemasons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Romani) as part of a programme of deliberate extermination. About 12 million, most of whom were Eastern Europeans, were employed in the German war economy as forced labourers.

In addition to Nazi concentration camps, the Soviet gulags (labour camps) led to the death of citizens of occupied countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, as well as German prisoners of war (POWs) and even Soviet citizens who had been or were thought to be supporters of the Nazis. Sixty percent of Soviet POWs of the Germans died during the war. Richard Overy gives the number of 5.7 million Soviet POWs. Of those, 57 percent died or were killed, a total of 3.6 million. Some of the survivors were treated as traitors upon their return to the USSR (see Order No. 270).

Japanese prisoner-of-war camps, many of which were used as labour camps, also had high death rates. The International Military Tribunal for the Far East found the death rate of Western prisoners was 27.1 percent (for American POWs, 37 percent), seven times that of POWs under the Germans and Italians. The death rate among Chinese POWs was much larger; a directive ratified on 5 August 1937 by Hirohito declared that the Chinese were no longer protected under international law. While 37,583 prisoners from the UK, 28,500 from the Netherlands, and 14,473 from United States were released after the surrender of Japan, the number for the Chinese was only 56.

According to historian Zhifen Ju, at least five million Chinese civilians from northern China and Manchukuo were enslaved between 1935 and 1941 by the East Asia Development Board, or *Kōain*, for work in mines and war industries. After 1942, the number reached 10 million. The U.S. Library of Congress estimates that in Java, between 4 and 10 million *romusha* (Japanese: "manual laborers"), were forced to work by the Japanese military. About 270,000 of these Javanese laborers were sent to other Japanese-held areas in South East Asia, and only 52,000 were repatriated to Java.

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On 19 February 1942, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, interning thousands of Japanese, Italians, German Americans, and some emigrants from Hawaii who fled after the bombing of Pearl Harbor for the duration of the war. The U.S. and Canadian governments interned 150,000 Japanese-Americans, as well as nearly 11,000 German and Italian residents of the U.S. Allied use of involuntary labor occurred mainly in the East, such as in Poland, but more than a million were also put to work in the West. In Hungary's case, Hungarians were forced to work for the Soviet Union until 1955.

Occupation

In Europe, occupation came under two very different forms. In Western, Northern and Central Europe (France, Norway, Denmark, the Low Countries, and the annexed portions of Czechoslovakia) Germany established economic policies through which it collected roughly 69.5 billion reichmarks (27.8 billion US Dollars) by the end of the war; this figure does not include the sizable plunder of industrial products, military equipment, raw materials and other goods. Thus, the income from occupied nations was over 40 percent of the income Germany collected from taxation, a figure which increased to nearly 40 percent of total German income as the war went on.

In the East, the much hoped for bounties of *Lebensraum* were never attained as fluctuating front-lines and Soviet scorched earth policies denied resources to the German invaders. Unlike in the West, the Nazi racial policy encouraged excessive brutality against what it considered to be the "inferior people" of Slavic descent; most German advances were thus followed by mass executions. Although resistance groups did form in most occupied territories, they did not significantly hamper German operations in either the East or the West until late 1943.

In Asia, Japan termed nations under its occupation as being part of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, essentially a Japanese hegemony which it claimed was for purposes of liberating colonised peoples. Although Japanese forces were originally welcomed as liberators from European domination in many territories, their excessive brutality turned local public opinions against them within weeks. During Japan's initial conquest it captured 4 million barrels of oil ($\sim 5.5 \times 10^5$ tonnes) left behind by retreating Allied forces, and by 1943 was able to get production in the Dutch East Indies up to 50 million barrels ($\sim 6.8 \times 10^6$ t), 76 percent of its 1940 output rate.

7. Scientific Revolution.

In the history of science, the **scientific revolution** was a period when new ideas in physics, astronomy, biology, human anatomy, chemistry, and other sciences led to a rejection of doctrines that had prevailed starting in Ancient Greece and continuing through the middle Ages, and laid the foundation of modern sciences. According to a majority of scholars, the scientific revolution began with the publication of two works that changed the course of science in 1543 and continued through the late 17th century: Nicolaus Copernicus: *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, and Andreas Vesalius: *On the Fabric of the Human body*.

Philosopher and historian Alexandre Koyré coined the term scientific revolution in 1939 to describe this epoch.

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