

History 225
Re: Outline of Foner Chpts.

Chapter Four "Ambiguities of Free Labor"

Clear conflict in terms of what the newly freedman wanted and what Southern whites wanted by way of a controllable and docile and cheap labor supply.

Historically, the picture of emancipation in all the Western hemisphere nations that had slavery and then went through emancipation was the onset of disrupted agricultural economy and rural poverty.

In the South the situation was a reprise of this. Planters needed a disciplined labor force and the freedman wanted autonomy.

Discussion of the role imposed upon the Freedman's Bureau after the war. The Bureau became on the on-the-scene welfare agency for blacks and poor yeoman farmers. Deal with educational needs, food, shelter, medical attention. . . and forced to deal with conflicts between the freeman and the planter class.

Education became the most lasting legacy of the Bureau's work in the postwar South. Most FB officials were committed to equality for blacks.

The rapid demobilization of the Union army and its presence in the South.

The quick reversion of the legal system to the local judiciary with the disbandment of Bureau courts in favor of retrun of legal automony to the South.

Note: That FB was not only viewed as a temporary solution in dealing with the postwar devastation and social distrupction but it was a military agency. Military the most conservatively oriented branch of the federal government. The Bureau was not equipped by personnel or inclination to get involved in social engineering.

The general sentiment of the military officials within the Bureau was to get the freedman to return to the plantation and was not to engage in social revolution or defending the freedman's rights.

Major point: On the question of land for the newly freed black this was taken out of the hands of the FB when President Johnson restored those lands provisionally assigned to blacks during the war under Sherman's FO 15, Davis Bend, Sea Isles of South Carolina.

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Re: Foner, Chpt. 5 Failure of Presidential Reconstruction

Sets up Johnson as a political "outsider." / Contrast with Lincoln.

States Rights Democrat. Also a Negrophobe. Johnson will accept the formality of 13th Amendment but certainly not its spirit.

States will decide on matters of suffrage for blacks. In all reality Johnson opposes any elevation of blacks or any gesture of equality that will place blacks anywhere where need an equal footing with whites. Johnson is a passionate advocate of white supremacy pure and simple.

Foner notes his 1867 annual message to Congress in which he denies absolutely that blacks are capable of self-governance; for him this could only lead to barbarism. Blacks must needs be under the careful scrutiny and discipline of the superior white race.

Foner characterizes this as perhaps the most blatant racist statement ever to appear in a state paper.

Foner sees Johnson's firing of General Banks in La. as the tip off of where he is heading with the affirmation of Wells policy that established the old time planter leadership and the dismantling of the La. government that was established under Lincoln's Ten Per Cent wartime policy.

Johnson's North Carolina Plan. How would he handle the provision covering those southerners exempted from political rights with property valued at \$20,000 or greater.

Johnson governments: What was the overt message:

That these new govts. did not have to make any further change in the freedman's status other than recognize that slavery per se was finished.

Foner notes that South was ready and prepared to make concessions that were demanded by Washington. South was jubilant and relieved beyond measure at the "generous" terms of Johnson's reconstruction policy. (Implied here that an opportunity was lost as far as movement toward some equality for blacks).

Discusses (1) removal of black troops (2) allowance of formation of white militia units to enforce the new regime on blacks (3) Johnson's pardoning policy

Discusses Johnson's motives.

Work of the Johnson Govts.

Resistance to the conditions laid out in NC Plan.

South's defiant optimism
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Black Codes (the litmus test)

Foner's conclusion: Some thing had gone awry. These govts. were manned by men (who while Unionists in 1860) were part of the antebellum political establishment. They ignored those few voices in the wilderness who advised that some concessions be made to blacks--especially those who were literate and those who served in the Union army. But this advice went ignored. They refused to do what could reasonably be expected that the North would want to see if only to affirm that the Union had, in fact, won the Civil War.

These Johnson Govts. brought down upon themselves Radical Reconstruction.

Chptr ends with Northern Response to Johnson's Govts.