

enough to have the consequences fall upon colored people the world over; but in the end it was even worse when one considers what this attitude did to the (white) worker. His aim and ideal was distorted...He began to want not comfort for all men but power over other men... He did not love humanity and he hated niggers."

Here's Wendell Phillips again. "I claim for the anti-slavery movement... it has been marked by sound judgement, unerring foresight, the most sagacious adaptation of means to ends, the strictest self-discipline, the most thorough research, and an amount of patient and manly argument addressed to the conscience and intellect of the nation, such as no other cause of the kind, in England or this country, has ever offered."

"Begin with the children and train their minds to habits of just feelings and acting, and you may hope for great success. But once you let the mind become imbued with the martial spirit - which is the same as the spirit of slaveholding, a spirit which leads man to domineer over his brother, to crush him and despoil him - that mind will not depart from this diabolical spirit." - Henry Wright.

"But why is it that it seems so repugnant to marry your sons and daughters to colored persons? Simply because public opinion is against it. Nature teaches no such repugnance, but experience has taught me that education only does. Do children feel and exercise that prejudice towards colored persons? Do not colored and white children play together promiscuously until the white is taught to despise the colored?" - David Ruggles.

"Man can better stand starvation than the consciousness of injustice. The consciousness that you are treated unjustly will rouse you to protest and rebellion just as quickly as hunger, perhaps even quicker. Hunger may be the immediate cause of every rebellion or uprising, but beneath it is the slumbering antagonism and hatred of the masses against those at whose hands they are suffering injustice and wrong. The truth is that right and injustice play a far more important role in our lives than most people are aware of." - Alexander Berkman.

"The sad drama of immigrants embracing whiteness while facing the threat of being victimized as nonwhite would have many sequels after the Irish experience." - David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*.

"We first debase the nature of man by making him a slave, and then very coolly tell him that he must always remain a slave because he does not know how to use freedom. We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever because they are prostrate." - Lydia Maria Child. She also said, "If anti-slavery made me take one particle less of interest in the sad music of the moon, the birth and death of the flowers, and above all, in the rose colored dreams of youthful love, I would abjure it tomorrow."

"Who can be serene in a country where both rulers and ruled are without principle? The remembrance of the baseness of politicians spoils my walks. My thoughts are murder to the State. I endeavor in vain to observe nature, my thoughts involuntarily go plotting against the State. I trust that all just men will conspire." - Henry David Thoreau.

"We do not play politics. Anti-slavery is no half-jest with us. It is a terrible earnest, with life or death, worse than life or death..." - my boy Wendell Phillips.

"Racism does not exempt white people from exploitation, it reconciles them to it." - Noel Ignatiev.

I tell you all this because history is the genetic blueprint of present day reality. Thankyou all for your attention.

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## An Abolitionist Response to Slavery and Racism

Good Evening

I'm sure many of you feel that abolitionism is an anachronistic idea. Slavery is over. Why would people consider themselves abolitionists today? That's what I hope to explain.

I want to present a brief history of Abolitionism - their teachings, goals, effect on history and how their tactics and principles can and are being utilized today. First I would like to define a few terms. Let me quote Ron Daniels, a long time activist in the struggle.

"Racism is the systematic discrimination against or exclusion or oppression of a group, based on an accidental set of qualities, like skin color, or hair color or hair texture or shape, size of lips, nose, etc. It is often institutional in character. It is not confined to individual acts. It is something deeply imbedded in American society.

One of the things we need to do is explode the myth of 'black racism,' because one of the things that happened over the course of the last twenty years, particularly with the Reagan administration, as the white backlash against the civil rights movement began to reach its zenith, is Reagan began to change the terms of the debate. He began to talk about 'reverse racism,' 'reverse discrimination' and something called 'black racism.'

Well, it is true that all human beings, including African-Americans, are not exempt from being prejudiced. Prejudice is the ability to pre-judge or the capacity to pre-judge and it is regrettable that people pre-judge things. People base their behavior and some of that behavior is not nice. Or, we might be chauvinist. This is the belief that one is better - one's group is better. Or, we might be bigoted. One might set out, out of hatred or mean-spiritedness, and do acts that are unkind, or on the basis of prejudice towards other groups. All of these things are bad, but they are not really what we are referring to when we talk about racism.

Racism really is the capacity to translate attitudes of superiority into customs, practice or law. The fact of the matter is, we are talking about the capacity of a group of people to take that animosity, that anger and hostility, that feeling of superiority and translate it into something that deprives people of the capacity to fulfill themselves."

The abolitionists were the most effective revolutionaries in American history aside from the founding fathers. The founding fathers however, codified, embedded and sanctified racism and slavery into the laws, customs and practices of American life, making it constitutionally legal. The abolitionists fought to destroy this most vile reality.

The American revolutionaries of 1776 were very lucky to throw off the usurious influence of England, who was preoccupied an ocean away. They set up a system which mocked their very own flowery words. They declared "All men are created equal" in one breath and with the other sanctioned, codified and legitimized human slavery. This may very well have been the most gallingly deceitful set of documents ever conjured. To his credit, Thomas Paine was one of the very few at this time to openly denounce this scourge. In his disgust, he went to France to continue the struggle for human liberty.

There are two ways of looking at race in this world. One is the big lie of racial superiority of so-called "white" people over those of color, particularly, the blacks. This somehow justifies genocide, slavery, racism, systematic oppression, degradation and the exploitation of most of the world's people, for the enrichment of a tiny minority of white, male capitalists. Most whites are less oppressed workers, used as pawns to perpetuate these practices. Many of them are neutralized into acquiescence to this system by the confusion and timidity systematic brainwash forces upon them. The other take on race is the big truth of racial equality and the struggle for its realization.

Capitalism has long relied on slavery and slave ideology - racism - to exploit the workers and poor of this world. Hitler based his attempted takeover of Europe on the successful model of the racist conquering by white invaders in the Western Hemisphere. He grovelled only to German capital. They approved his racist megalomania as they saw their dreams of ultra profits