

historical societies, with the work of the *Association for the Study of Negro Life and History* as one of several societies in these movements, will continue to make contributions to historical truth until recognition has been given to the unrecognized, and the separate groups are submerger with a sense of equality in the larger concept of the man to be known only as "an American."

## CHAPTER II

### THE TREATMENT OF THE NEGRO-AMERICAN IN THE STUDY AND TEACHING OF UNITED STATES HISTORY

The study and teaching of United States history and of the social studies in the public and private schools, colleges and universities of the United States have been in need of reconstruction over long years. This reconstruction is not concerned so much with the techniques and process of teaching as with the human relations aspects of the subjects. Endeavors have been made successfully in the past to bring non-Western studies into American history, to include Latin-American studies, and to reconstruct and expand these endeavors to embrace the treatment on impartial and unbiased bases the history of nations of peoples, different in culture and appearance from average Americans.<sup>1</sup> The time has now arrived for an additional reconstruction of the teaching of history in the schools to include the peoples who compose these nations, the disadvantaged peoples, who also have a history. Neither history teaching as it is now in the schools, nor history reading at leisure can have lasting value for youth of color and create the Promethean fire which has motivated nations and peoples to greatness. Youth can no longer grow to an adulthood "wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born." Solutions can be had to this problem of two worlds, one white and the other black, through the activities of white and black citizens in united efforts against the neglects by Boards of Education, school administrators, book selection committees, and teachers, particularly in history.

This problem is complicated especially by the growth of city populations through the migration from rural sections to urban ones, and the shifts from state to state and from South to North, which have been significant tendencies in contemporary America.<sup>2</sup> A major movement of people in our time is the growth of the Negro population in the central cities of metropolitan centers. This trend has become the outstanding dramatic urban change of the Mid-Twentieth Century. Twenty major cities have over seven million colored people in their

city population. The twelve largest urban centers in the United States, including New York City, had almost a third of the Negro-American population in 1960, while the proportion of white-Americans in these areas had decreased steadily since 1930.<sup>3</sup> Some of these peoples have had impoverished cultural backgrounds; their test scores show their difficulties in achieving standards although these scores do not show their potentialities nor their creativity. With direction, the disadvantaged could become a people with pride in race, color and heritage, eager to develop themselves as other Americans have done.

On the contrary, using the textbooks adopted and directed by teachers who have not known the newer facts of history, these groups feel that there has been conscious and unconscious bias, neglect and omission of the facts of history as they concern their heritage and their ancestors. Adults, teachers and parents, are more important than textbooks, for even if the textbook or the supplementary material is weak, they should know where and how to find the complete truth and tell it.

Youths of whatever color are not born with prejudice or dislike or hatred for people other than themselves. These reactions must be learned. In the well-known play, "South Pacific," Ensign Nellie Forbush from Little Rock, Arkansas, is troubled by prejudice against colored persons. She says, "Yes, I can't help it — this is something that is born in me." Lieutenant Coblé replies, "It's not born in you. It happens after you're born." Then he sings:

You've got to be taught to hate and fear  
You've got to be taught from year to year  
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear,  
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught to be afraid  
Of people whose eyes are oddly made  
And people whose skin is a different shade —  
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught before it's too late  
Before you're six or seven or eight  
To hate all the people your relatives hate —  
You've got to be carefully taught!

The home and the school are the places where youth is first taught words, ideas, and attitudes, and these have begun when they come to the school. Our task is to construct and reconstruct these concepts, to replace ignoble with noble thoughts, unworthy ideas with worthy ones, bad behavior with good behavior, as they come to school. The experiences and impressions, the mind pictures and the images spoken in words and word pictures by parents and adults form stereotypes which have found easy lodgement in their thoughts.

In this connection, Edward A. Johnson, teacher and historian, writing in 1891 has stated the following: "I have often observed the sin of omission and commission on the part of white authors, most of whom seem to have written exclusively for white children, and studiously left out the many creditable deeds of the Negro. The general tone of most of the histories taught in our schools has been that of the inferiority of the Negro, whether actually said in so many words, or left to be implied from the highest laudation of the deeds of one race to the complete exclusion of those of the other."<sup>4</sup> These contrasts historically are common in our schools today, although they are decreasing, but with neglect and omission, reinforcement is given too often to that which has been learned at home not only from parents and neglectful adults, but also from associates, books, newspapers and the deadly silence and implication.

#### I. *Minorities in American History*

In order to overcome such obstacles to sound human relations, positive steps have been undertaken by minorities of the American population. New opinions, new attitudes and new behavior are being learned by youths and adults. One of the important ways by which negative views are being surmounted is in the areas of history, in meetings of historical societies and in history clubs, in teaching in the schools, and in youth and adult meetings, and in the churches and public institutions.

In this respect, there are historical societies representing groups of the nation's population which have been seeking to reconstruct the past with published presentations worthy of their people. Into this neglected field, there has come in addition to many minor ones, such primary societies as the American-Irish Historical Society, American-Jewish Historical Society, the Huguenot Society of America, and others representing groups whose origins were French, Dutch, Spanish, Russian, Norwegian, Scandinavian, Swedish, Swiss and Finnish; as well as the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, founded and incorporated in 1915 by Carter G. Woodson, to relate itself to African and Negro-American origins and history.<sup>5</sup>

In a nation composed of various ethnic groups and in cities where major population groups are in contacts, it was inevitable that there would be writers who would neglect or ignore or be misinformed about the contributions to American life of other groups than their own, especially when these groups are regarded as unimportant to the mainstream of history. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History has entered this field and has directed attention to African and Negro-American history, and it has lifted the African and the American of color into a larger view so that all who read may learn and all who teach may have the inspiration and the facts at their disposal. It has become clear to all of us who are interested in education that "if a man is to strive with all his heart, the significance of his striving must be unmistakable." Therefore, we now strive toward goals which are regarded as revolutionary.

We think, speak and write now of revolutions. There have been three major ones in the United States. The first began in 1776, the second began in 1861, and the third began in 1954, and is unfinished ten years later; each and all centering around the extension of the Rights of Man. Basic to this Third Revolution was its background in Negro history. It should not be strange that this revolution began in the South and was initiated by youths in the schools and colleges there. For in these schools for colored, although segregated, Negro history was not neglected but was taught by teachers who knew it and believed in it and by parents and adults who used it for motivation purposes. This can be achieved in desegregated schools and be one of our goals. For we can fight for desegregated schools and ignore this important purpose of education — but we dare not. This is the kind of group attitude of which Thomas Gray writes, describing the English people as reading English "history in a nation's eyes," the Negro youth see their history in their people's eyes, believe in themselves, walk in the dignity of a proud self, and develop understanding of their past, and present, and hope for the future. And because it was believed that Negroes had contributed as Americans to the major aspects of America's history, the confidence was that they would gain entrance to the mainstream of American life. It was unfortunate that this foundation of belief in ourselves had not been built in Northern schools although it was taught in many homes and churches. However, we are now on our way toward this goal, and the results are being revealed in reactions in schools and public places as the Third Revolution spreads.

History, read and taught, in the schools, should not be the story of people of one color with the neglect and omission of the men and women of another race or color. When a part of the people, a minority as a group, has been neglected or given subordinate place, history for a truthful presentation should be reconstructed and not neglected, in the interest of good human relations.

The cities of the North, and the central parts of cities in particular reveal these weaknesses in the largest measure. Here, there has developed power and potential from the various racial groups. Here, there have been commendable endeavors by some schools and churches in the teaching and presentation of the worthy aspects of minority backgrounds. The descendants of some of these immigrants who were white and without the accident of darker color, learned English and American ways and were easily lost within the major white population as the assimilation process worked in their interest as Americans.

On the other hand, the people of color could not hide their darker color, and were frequently denied employment and associations and were at times eliminated even from jobs which they had once held exclusively because of their color. Such policies induced many colored people to be ashamed of themselves, for they knew little and learned less of their homeland, Africa, and they were informed only of slavery in their historical life in America. They learned mainly

that the people of color had been set free by heroic and generous white Americans, but heroic and self-sacrificing black Americans were neglected. When this creation of egocentric images by whites of themselves on one side, and the pictures of discredit presented to and accepted by Negroes on the other, is faced with the truth as represented by the writings of historians, there had to be new considerations in the publication of textbooks, and in the teaching of them. In several cities there were endeavors made to have desirable supplementary historical materials published, to represent desirable books to school libraries, and to have competent and capable historians go to work revising texts, which have been found to be wanting in the improvement of a people's morale and the development of understanding and appreciation of Americans for other Americans.<sup>4</sup>

In describing this concept of the United States as a nation of peoples, Louis Adamic has said that there are two ways of looking at our history. The first is the prevailing and dominant view of some historians, essayists, novelists, short-story writers and editors, "that the United States is an Anglo-Saxon country with a white-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon civilization struggling to preserve itself against infiltration and adulteration by other civilizations brought here by Negroes and hordes of foreigners." The second view is, "that the pattern of the United States is not essentially Anglo-Saxon although her language is English. Nor is the pattern Anglo-Saxon with a motley addition of dams and patches. The pattern of America is all of a piece; it is a blend of cultures from many lands, woven of threads from many corners of the world. Diversity is the pattern is the stuff and color of the fabric."<sup>5</sup>

It was in the same spirit and for the same purpose that Franklin D. Roosevelt declared, "We are rich in the elements from which to weave a culture. In blending these elements into a national fabric of beauty and strength, let us keep the original fibers so intact that the fineness in each will show in the completed handiwork."<sup>6</sup> More recently, President Lyndon Johnson from within the shadows of the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy has declared, "Let us put an end to the teaching and preaching of hate."<sup>7</sup>

This comment is a truthful one for the idea of an America of different peoples is an historical fact. We are a composite nation. We are in debt to one another, each group to the other, to open the opportunity to contribute ourselves, our qualities, virtues, weaknesses and strengths, resources and skills to the making of a great story as a nation and its building across the years. We will never know how many potential scholars, scientists, artists and talented persons we in America lose through our teaching as well as through closed opportunities. One result is that the Negro becomes resentful and carries a chip on his shoulder. He does this not because this is a racial trait but because he is made into "a wounded animal" by the society which he could serve. Warped personalities constitute the price we pay and with these, the statistics of crime mount. We Americans pay dearly for the protection of our prejudices.

## II. The Historical Backgrounds of United States History

As students of history continue their researches and writings, the conclusion is being reached that while there has been not only a "European background" to our history, there has been also an "Asiatic background" and an "African background." None of these should be omitted nor neglected in the interest of historical truth. Increased interest in Asiatic studies has supplied one of the needs. This neglect as to Africa and black folk serves to create an assumption of an inferior history rather than even a difference of culture. The hypothesis of the inferiority of achievement becomes the more deeply entrenched in the American mind when the textbooks give little information and there is no teaching concerning the black and brown people in Africa as persons in history. The psychological effect of this neglect upon the minds of youth when they have friends and associates who can speak proudly of their European background and learn nothing of their African background and heritage has been quite evident.

During a century and a half of the writing and teaching of history in the schools, the framework for the presentation of African history has been to ignore it or to include it as the history of colonialism, or missionary endeavor, or to assign it to anthropology and ethnology. This has been generally without great variance, until the African nations emerged on the world scene to the marked amazement of observers. For historical accounts had neglected to call attention to indigenous African history and civilizations, while giving large place to the European background, to which one of the older series on American history — the American Nation series — devoted an entire first volume. It has been a definite procedure among writers, teachers and students to correlate the history of the United States with the history of the old world. This connection in courses of study was regarded as necessary because account should be taken of the origins, governments and cultures of the peoples and nations from which the American people and their civilization have been derived.

Nevertheless, African influences in Egyptian civilization were ignored, while Greece and Rome were treated as if their civilization originated with them. In fact, Egypt is made by false teaching almost an island standing alone in Africa, the impression being left that the rest of Africa was uncivilized, whereas civilizing influences moved from South to North in Africa and across Africa to southern Europe.<sup>8</sup> This neglect in the field of cultural history has caused some students to conclude that the African peoples, except in certain restricted areas, have lived in a land without a civilization or a history, but Europe even in its tribal history of Goths, Visigoths, Angles, Saxons, Franks, Huns, Vandals, is accepted by history.

Europe's civilization was not an indigenous north European product. It was a blending and a borrowing from the peoples of the Tigris-Euphrates area, Babylonia, Assyria, Israel, Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, Arabia, China, and also Africa.<sup>9</sup> There were fertilizations and cross-fertilizations dating back through centuries. The defense of the

great contributions by white Europeans and the blatant attacks and criticisms of the contributions of Dark Africa are totally clumsy and essentially false. Western European civilization was a mixture. Even now historians and teachers refer to the "Barbarian Invasion of Rome," from northern Europe, and yet these invasions are glamorized and made intellectually satisfactory.

However, civilizations of black and brown peoples flourished in west, east, south and central Africa, from which a majority of the American slaves came. In the west, Benin, Yoruba, Nupe, Melle, Songhay, Mossi, and other kingdoms had civilizations worthy of commendation. From these sections of West Africa, Africans set out on voyages to the West, reaching the Americas and the islands.

In the period when the European tribal life was primitive in large areas, Africa had organized kingdoms spread over west and central parts of that continent, from which black slaves were drawn. These civilizations declined through the Mohammedan conquests and the rise of the slave trade. Some few smaller kingdoms were stimulated to greater temporary activity by the Mohammedan influences, but the slave trade proved to be a blight upon civilizing developments. Whole villages were depopulated, and kings turned to the easier ways of living provided by the trade in men rather than to the slower processes of permanent state building.

With the facts which are coming to light concerning African history, the traditions of its past will be changed as a result of the publication of the historical truth. Africa will be seen historically also as people with civilizations prior to the rise of the slave trade. The omissions of African history and civilization do not produce a well-balanced account of our old world backgrounds. Neither the search for truth nor the creation of right attitudes in a democracy are served by this unbalanced situation as it relates to our African background.

### III. Servitude and Slavery

The main outlines of the treatment of the Negro as a slave have changed very little as United States history is taught from the adopted textbooks. An author or a teacher usually presents the following subjects: the introduction of Negroes into Virginia in 1619, sections on the slave trade, slavery as a labor system, the opposition to it, implied defenses of it and unsatisfactory references to the ability of Negroes to do arduous labor far better than Indians who revolted or died. Slavery is treated as a desirable, humane and benevolent labor system for Negroes. The abolitionists and anti-slavery leaders are described as fanatics, psychotics and insane persons whose acme is represented in such men known as radicals or liberals, William Lloyd Garrison, Thaddeus Stephens, and Charles Sumner, who were interested in American freedom, friendly and favorable to opportunities for peoples of color, but there are numerous white historians who have vilified, ridiculed or distorted their participation in history.

This in general is the traditional treatment of the textbooks and of teachers, as apologetic approaches for slavery are presented. But

historical researches and scholarly historical writings have produced a body of fact and interpretation concerning the Negro-American which cannot be ignored any longer by textbook writers who should portray the truth to our youth. With the facts which the members of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History have published and made widely known, is there any wonder that now some textbook writers and some publishers are engaged in some revisions of slavery and servitude? It is highly probable that they will not do the job which we expect of them. Let us watch their work critically and constructively, and let our dissatisfactions be known.

Negroes were with the Spanish explorers in the Sixteenth Century. They were active with explorers in pre-Columbian America. The evidence that a Negro was a pilot in the fleet of Columbus is entirely too unhistoric. Neither Dr. Woodson nor I have accepted this allusion as a historic fact. Professor Leo Weiner of Harvard suggests in his two-volume *Africa and the Discovery of America* that Negroes may have come prior to the Spanish discoveries as well as with them.<sup>11</sup> Additional evidence leads to the conclusion that Negroes were with the Spanish explorer, De Ayllon, when he made a settlement within the present limits of the United States in Virginia in 1528.<sup>12</sup>

Slavery as a labor system has been receiving new interpretations from the economic and social points of view. Revisions have been made in many of slavery's aspects: the relation to the labor force of indentured servants, for the first Negroes brought to the American shores were servants for terms of years and not slaves *durante vita*; the evidence that some slaves became free Negroes and had sued in the courts and voted as citizens prior to 1789; the doctrine of racial inferiority as a justification for slavery; the study of plantation traditions in letters of overseers and plantation records; Negro biographies; the insurrectionary and revolutionary attitudes of Negroes as contrasted with the general view of their contentment with slavery, for resistance to slavery was extensive in the South; the presence of intelligent slaves as well as unintelligent ones, and the similar variation in the character of the planter class; the support of the slave trade by Northerners and the existence of virtual slavery in Northern areas; the legal fictions concerning the Negro as a human being and not as property, and the individual and organized efforts of Negroes in search of freedom.<sup>13</sup> These subjects and more were the accompaniments of slavery and are constituting areas of revision, because they do not appear in the school textbooks.

New appraisals of slavery as a labor system are being made and should replace the softened story of the textbooks, which describe it as a beneficent period of life and labor for Negroes by a kindly Southern aristocracy, with both owners and slaves humane and happy — all of which was disrupted by demented abolitionists and so-called insane leaders of whom John Brown is a characteristic exemplar. However, Kenneth Stampff has approached the subject of slavery with the assumption "that slaves were merely human beings, that innate Negroes are, after all, only white men, with black skins,

nothing more, nothing less."<sup>14</sup> The Southern approach to slavery is being repudiated, and one day these new descriptions will make their way into the textbooks, and they can be introduced in our study, reading and teaching so that the mythical and romantic institution will exist no longer in our imaginations, and we shall learn that whites, as well as blacks, North and South, were debased by slavery.

#### IV. Free Negro-Americans

The Free Negro is no longer regarded as a shiftless class so degraded that the slaves were superior to him in economic and social status because they were cared for kindly by their masters. Such opinions are ironic and are without bases in fact. For from the early periods of indentured servitude, there were free Negroes. We learn of Anthony Johnson, who was listed among the first black immigrants, and who became a free man in 1625, a landowner, a slave holder, and prosecuted a suit in the courts to determine his right to a slave, John Castor, with an expired term of seven years. From this beginning in the English Colonies there was a continuous increase in this free group of Americans.<sup>15</sup>

A Hessian officer wrote during the War for American Independence, "No regiment is seen in which there are not Negroes in abundance and among them are able-bodied, strong fellows. Here, too, there are many families of free Negroes who live in good homes, have property and live like the rest of the inhabitants."<sup>16</sup> Over five thousand free Negroes served in the revolution as American soldiers. Some were in the British Army, and are numbered among the American Tories as were American whites. The first martyr of the Revolution was Crispus Attucks, a Negro. He with three white Americans were the first martyrs to freedom; they were integrated in life as in death and were buried together. A monument with their names is on Boston Commons. It can be said with a sense of reality that Thomas Jefferson thinking on this scene, dipped his pen in the blood of these martyrs, one the blood of a Negro, and wrote the immortal words of the Declaration of Independence, that all men were created equal. In the War of 1812, brave free black men fought with Admiral Perry on the Great Lakes and with General Andrew Jackson at New Orleans.<sup>17</sup>

Free Negroes had grown in number from 59,557 or 7.9 per cent in the first census of 1790 to 488,070 or 11.0 per cent in 1860.<sup>18</sup> The observation of them by Frances Kemble has been regarded as unsound to the effect that "they are pariahs, debarred from every fellowship save with their own despised race, scorned by the lowest ruffian in your kitchen. They are free, certainly, but they are also degraded, the offscum and the offscouring of the very dregs of your society."<sup>19</sup> Studies of the free Negro have not only abandoned this view but they show the ownership of property and slaves, of voting, education, and civic activity.<sup>20</sup> As a fact the legal and actual status of the Negro did not always coincide. While there were limitations upon the Negro citizen's privilege of voting, there were many evidences of participation

in Northern states in the exercise of the suffrage and in political life prior to the Civil War, as early as the First American Revolution. The citizenship of some Negroes is far older than we realize.<sup>21</sup>

Legal repression, as well as economic and social repression, was not sectional for Northern states also passed restrictive legislation and exclusion laws. Nevertheless, Negroes entered these states and participated in their life. In the South some were owners of slaves and plantations and accordingly had the planter's point of view.<sup>22</sup> However, the participation of Negroes in anti-slavery activities was considerable and manifests their devotion and sacrifice for their own freedom and the freedom of America. They served as active members of Abolition societies, three served at one time as members of the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society. They were operators of the Underground Railroad, editors of newspapers advocating freedom, subscribers and writers to the *Liberator* and the anti-slavery papers. In fact, the largest number of subscribers to Garrison's *Liberator* were free Negroes, and only one-fourth of the subscribers were white, and without the contributions of Negroes, Garrison could not have succeeded and he could not have made his trip to England without their contributions — but who tells this fact?<sup>23</sup>

#### V. The Civil War

In the teaching of the Civil War, views have been presented to the effect that slavery was not the cause, nor was it one of the major causes; that the Negro was not an active factor in it; that the War was fought between white brothers and again that it was a white man's war; that the Emancipation Proclamation was a war measure; that the South fought more nobly than the North and that only Northern superior numbers and wealth won the War. Nothing is farther from the truth than these common textbook allegations. One fact is overlooked and that is that the Confederacy collapsed from its own internal weaknesses, that psychological internal factors worked against its continuance as well as the Northern armies and that loss of the will to fight for a losing cause against the Rights of Man was a prominent cause of defeat.

The Confederacy is glorified and the heroes of the armies of freedom are played down. The result is that now the Confederate flag, cap and colors are displayed more widely than the national flag and emblems. *Dixie*, as a song for the South can call forth more enthusiasm than the *Star Spangled Banner*, and certainly than the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The concept of the Confederates as traitors and rebels to their government is not mentioned but instead they are made heroes. Southerners still cherish their dogmas which appear in the textbooks in the spirit of "the Confederacy is dead long live the Confederacy."

Another major fact is that Negroes fought for their freedom in the Civil War. Their activities are substantiated by rosters, contemporary accounts, statements of commanders, and their own testimony. They did not hold their hands while others fought for their freedom.

They were active fighters and citizen workers in Northern states for their own freedom. There were 189,000 Negroes in the Union Armies in 165 regiments — infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers, and 29,000 in the navies, and with these there were other thousands unlisted. That the support of the Negro was regarded as valuable to the Confederacy has also been shown, but their traditional loyalty to their masters because they loved them has been subjected to change. It is clear that colored men wanted to be free just as those who were white, and that they worked and fought for it. They were not the Uncle Toms of the Cabin nor were they cowards and buffoons, nor did they refuse to work after the dawn of freedom. Secretary of the Navy Wells said in the summer of 1863, "All of our increased military strength now comes from Negroes."<sup>24</sup>

#### VI. Reconstruction and Its Aftermath

The reconstruction treatment with its portrayal of federal occupation, southern white disfranchisement, social upheaval, carpetbagging and the overturning of the Amendments for civil rights and wider democracy, is still in process of study, and it is well-known that there were viewpoints which have been invalid. The studies of Beale, DuBois, Taylor, Woody, Simkins and Franklin have introduced new materials and new interpretations. In the light of these studies, we are having to revise our views that the Negro was on a holiday after slavery was abolished, that he was more interested in selling his vote than in working on a job, and that the Negro and his friends were corrupt and extravagant. James Ford Rhodes, historian of Reconstruction, who was followed by many textbooks, wrote that "The scheme of Reconstruction pandered to the ignorant Negroes, the knavish white natives and the vulturous adventures who flocked from the North; and these neutralized the work of honest Republicans who were officers of State." An edition of a widely used high school text states: "The rule of the Negro and his unscrupulous carpetbagger and scalawag patrons was an orgy of extravagance, fraud and disgusting incompetence." John W. Burgess, who is remembered for his founding of the Columbia University School of Political Science, which trained many Southern historians, believed that there was a "vast difference in the political capacities between the races," and that it was "the white man's mission, his duty and his right to hold the reigns of political power in his own hands for the civilization of the world and the welfare of mankind." These views have been accepted by numbers of textbooks and have been, false as they are, determinative of attitudes on suffrage extension to Negroes in our time.

A 1963 sixth grade textbook to inform children concerning "the Southern way of life," adopted and used in Mississippi, entitled, *Our Mississippi*, by Pearl Vivian Guyton, revised edition, states, "In 1866, a secret organization, the Ku Klux Klan, was founded in Tennessee. The purpose of the Klan was the protection of the weak, innocent, and defenseless people, especially the widows and orphans of the Confederate soldiers." It is impossible to estimate the harm done to race

relations by these false statements and this pandering to prejudice, instead of presenting the truth of history. The *Mississippi Free Press*, a Negro weekly, comments on this textbook, "There can be no justifiable defense for such a tone in any book that pretends to provide instruction. For whenever history is allowed to become propaganda, a whole dimension of human growth is automatically lost."

Documentary research shows that no state was dominated in its legislative body by Negroes, and that Southern legislatures were not the only ones guilty of unworthy financial actions. Moreover, financial reforms and progressive social legislation also came from these legislatures.<sup>25</sup>

#### VII. Participation and Contribution by Negro-Americans

The period since the Civil War saw the Negro people over the years participate in events and make contributions with other peoples to the material and cultural development of the United States, the opening of the West, the extension of education, the development of our fundamental institution, and the continued winning of a freedom which all Americans could enjoy. In the treatment of our national development, the textbook writer, the parent, the adult, the teacher should not fail to seize opportunities to show the Negro-American as well as the white American as a factor with others in the agricultural and industrial development of this country, in the continuing controversy over states rights and the growth of nationalism, woman's suffrage, the tariff, civil rights, and sectional issues. Presentations should be made of the literature, music, art and the unique cultural contributions of the Negro people to United States History, but not by naming one or two contributors. Such treatment should be on the same basis, as the treatment given to other American contributors.<sup>26</sup>

The evidence concerning the effects of improved educational, home and economic conditions on the academic achievements of the culturally deprived is now available in the recent reports of aptitude and achievement tests. It has been established that the educational opportunities of migrating youth to Northern cities has resulted in increases in intelligent quotients and reading scores. The effective teacher, parent or adult, can show that the social forces of segregation and discrimination so spread themselves that it is not the Negro alone who suffers from a poor image but that all people in a community are effected by the injustices in teaching subject-matter to any one group. Youth sees the subordinate place of himself and his family, knows nothing of the worthy past, all of which tends to weaken his self-esteem, and is at the basis of unworthy activities.

The years since World War II have witnessed new trends toward equality of opportunity and unprecedented advancement. Most recently, associating themselves with these trends, white and black folk have undertaken a militancy of action in 1963 and 1964, based upon non-violence and have manifested by peaceful demonstrations an overt impatience with the slowness of the crumbling of the barriers

to improved human relations. This does not mean that there is a "New Negro" as compared with an old satisfied one, for there have been numerous Negro revolts and insurrections as overt expressions of dissatisfaction through the years of the past. However, there has developed The Third American Revolution in a new demand for equality of opportunity and right in all aspects of American life.<sup>27</sup> It began and I would emphasize, upon the foundation built by our Association for the Study of Negro Life and History through which Negro youths began to believe in the achievements of their predecessors and in their heritage, to believe in themselves which was a substitution for self-depreciation, and to learn that they had a background of freedom as well as slavery, that they as a people have marched forward toward freedom, expressing themselves through leading figures from their group in many fields of endeavor. For such basic reasons the effective writing and efficient teaching of history must include Negroes as well as whites. Let us keep watch on the ramparts of our broadly based revolution that textbooks and teaching shall not continue to besmirch the Negro's heritage.

#### VIII. *The Intercultural Approach*

The intercultural approach is an important step for all Americans to undertake as they look at their school system and programs. We are Americans all — immigrants all. The whole question of "race" and its association with "color" should be undergoing examination and concepts of racialism should have to undergo change. The doctrine of inherent racial differences has been discredited years ago, but apparently many leaders in modern life have not caught up with it. We are also aware that it is still active in the popular mind.<sup>28</sup> In this process of change, attitudes toward the Negro can be affected by a more extensive teaching of historical facts which show that slavery, serfdom, and proscription are not the lots of the Negro people alone because of their race, or their black or brown faces, for other peoples, even so-called white people, have been slaves. Slavery has been no respecter of peoples or colors.

Thoughtful citizens will have to undertake this task because textbooks are generally ethnocentric so that the opinion reached by pupils from reading and from pictures is that the American is of the European and Nordic types. Other students who read and look at the picture types are led to believe that they do not belong. An approach is adopted in a first reader in Brazil, which states that there are three mothers in Brazil, one white or European, a second red or Indian, and one black or African, and the book then describes how the Brazilian people have developed not only from three sources but from still others. Our youth could have similar approaches rather than the direct or indirect implication that Americans are tall, white and blond, and that this was and is the ideal and the American type. Since a contrary view is closer to reality, readers should be given more complete pictures of American life in history. The troubles in Cuba and Panama and currently in many places are backgrounded by race and color, and international

relations in many areas of the world are affected by the American concept of color superiority. White children as well as black and brown ones, suffer psychologically from the negative forces of deficient history teaching.<sup>29</sup>

There are psychologists who express the view that the normal development of the relations of white children with colored children is retarded by biased or neglected instruction and reading, for they are led to the opinion that they are more acceptable, and are superior because their faces are paler, and accordingly, their chances for success in life are greater. Then later, when they find this result unrealizable, they become stubborn and adamant, and when they meet Negroes who seem to be equal, they insist that they are superior defending their position by declaring defiantly nevertheless that Negroes are inferior and should be kept in their places. They are even influenced by earlier teaching to support legislation and directives to give reality to their assumptions. What a tragedy is created in the consciences of white Americans by such an educational program — to say little of their influences upon black Americans. This educational program is backgrounded by a general atmosphere of hatred and violence against those who disagree with others on human relations, equality, justice and opportunity for all Americans. The atmosphere of intolerance forms the backdrop for the staging of regrettable scenes.

If social scientists and social studies teachers will use their materials as do the physical scientists who because of the color of their animals, specimens or materials, neither discard nor discount any essential facts or implications, the teaching of our history can become more comprehensive and effective in an educational effort which will keep our nation a people who live not only in the home of the brave in war, but the land of the free in peace. There are fewer battlegrounds for the minds of men, on any front, than in the classrooms of social studies teachers where attitudes concerning Negroes and others are being constructed either by positive or negative action.

Two decades ago the Advisory Commission of the National Council for the Social Studies declared:

"We are immigrants and descendants of immigrants, a nation of many religions and races, a nation which rejects class and caste distinctions as incompatible with our way of life. Racist thinking and scapegoating, the fomenting of divided loyalties, the accepting of groups, are consonant neither with our democratic way of life, nor with the scientific findings of anthropologists and psychologists, as part of a societal attack on the economic and psychological roots of intergroup hostility, intercultural education in the school can make a contribution."<sup>30</sup>

We still await the concrete implementation of this directive. This national call was not only a challenge yesterday but it is today. It is a privilege to engage in the democratic opportunity to help unify and create appreciation and understanding among peoples of different creeds, races, and nationalities.

As Americans, let us present and make available the information and correct the falseness of the myths, destroy the stereotypes and uproot the negative traditional opinions about Negro-Americans. Let us develop experiences and contacts so that white majorities can overcome their fears, the prejudice and the insecurity associated with Negro-Americans in the past and the present.

Let us support the organizations which continue to advocate the teaching of the truth so that the treatment of history on the basis of the inferiority of color can be terminated in our time. Let us strip the long time encrustations of hypocrisy from our democratic ideals, for the effect upon the American conscience of having dedications to ideals and then the participation in actions which deny them, is to develop confused persons, unhappy homes and ultimately an undemocratic state. Men and women become silent or stubbornly defensive before color, deny its realities, put the blame on some scapegoat of color rather than look within themselves. Let us continue our insistence that history's teaching about Negro-Americans shall be truthful and that it shall become a part of the history of the nation's great destiny of freedom and opportunity, although we may belong to different population groups.

Our purpose and objective center around the declaration which we would have all Americans, white and black, say with others "That they have a goodly heritage." This heritage is a living, changing spiritually vital thing, and is not enshrined in historical documents merely to be revered — the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Supreme Court Decision of 1954. This heritage is transmitted not only by what is said in these documents but by what is done about them, and primarily by us and the friends of freedom. Our heritage is a continuously functioning process which needs to be relearned in the schools and revitalized by each generation of youths. It should be reinforced by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and its workers. The textbooks and the supplementary readers must be criticized continuously, the intercultural programs increased, the teachers supplied with additional materials and the citizen leaders who know the truth must dedicate themselves to its realization in a revolution in the minds of men. Basic to the success and attainment of freedom and the extension of democratic practices through the current Revolution is the freedom of minds through history's study, reading and teaching.

In this respect:

"We are the music-makers  
And we are the dreamers of dreams  
Wandering by lone sea-breakers  
And sitting by desolate streams —  
World losers and world-forsakers,  
On whom the pale moon gleams;  
Yet we are the movers and shakers  
Of the world for-ever it seems:

"We, in the ages lying  
In the buried past of the earth,  
Built Ninevah with our sighing,  
And Babel itself in our mirth;  
And o'erthrew them with prophesying  
To the old of the new world's worth;  
For each age is a dream that is dying  
Or one that is coming to birth."

In history, what shall it be through us — a dream of freedom that is dying or a dream of freedom that is coming to actual birth? The answer is ours!