LEGACY OF Reconstruction

READING 1

We hold it to be the duty of the government to inflict condign punishment on the rebel belligerents, and so weaken their hands that they can never again endanger the Union; and so reform their municipal institutions as to make them republican in spirit as well as in name....

We propose to confiscate all the estate of every rebel belligerent whose estate was worth $l0,000 or whose land exceeded two hundred acres in quantity....By thus forfeiting the estates of the leading rebels, the Government would have 394,000,000 of acres....Give if you please forty acres to each adult male freedman. Suppose there are one million of them. That would require 40,000,000 of acres....

The whole fabric of southern society must be changed....How can republican institutions, free schools, free churches, free social intercourse exist in a mingled community of nabobs and serfs; of the owners of twenty thousand acre manors with lordly palaces, and the occupants of narrow huts inhabited by "low white trash?"....

The property of the rebels shall pay our national debt, and indemnify freedmen and loyal sufferers.

**--Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, 1865, on the radical program for Reconstruction**

READING 2

Be it enacted, That said rebel States shall be divided into military districts and made subject to the military authority of the United States...That it shall be the duty of each officer...to protect all persons in their rights of persons and property, to suppress insurrection, disorder, and violence, or cause to be punished, all disturbers of the public peace and criminals....

**--First Reconstruction Act, 1867, the radical program**

READING 3

The power...given to the commanding officer over all the people of each district is that of an absolute monarch. His mere will is to take the place of all law....It reduces the whole population of the ten states--all persons, of every color, sex, and condition, and every stranger within their limits--to the most abject and degrading slavery.

**--President Johnson's veto of the radical program**

READING 4

Waving the Bloody Flag

Every state that seceded from the United States was a Democratic State....Every man that shot Union soldiers was a Democrat. Every man that loved slavery better than liberty was a Democrat. The man that assassinated Abraham Lincoln was a Democrat....Every man that raised bloodhounds to pursue human beings was a Democrat. Every man that clutched from shrieking, shuddering, crouching mothers, babes from their breasts, and sold them into slavery, was a Democrat.

**--Robert G. Ingersoll, 1876**

READING 5

It was the most soul-sickening spectacle that America had ever been called upon to behold. Every principle of the old American polity was here reversed. In place of government by the most intelligent and virtuous part of the people for the benefit of the governed, here was government by the most ignorant and vicious part of the population for the benefit, the vulgar, materialistic, brutal benefit of the governing set.

**--Historian John W. Burgess, 1902**

READING 6

In South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana, the proportion of Negroes was so large, their leaders of sufficient power, and the Federal control so effective that for the years l868-l874 the will of black labor was powerful; and so far as it was intelligently led, and had definite goals, it took perceptible steps toward public education, confiscation of large incomes, betterment of labor conditions, universal suffrage, and in some cases distribution of land to the peasant.

**--W.E.B. DuBois**

Answer the following Questions on a Separate set of paper:

* What was the radical Republican program for reconstructing the Union?
* What were the goals of the radical Republican program?
* Why was the program unacceptable to President Andrew Johnson?
* Why do you think the North failed to follow through with policies that would haves secured the rights and economic status of the freedmen?
* What were the major political and social achievements of Reconstruction?