CLASS STRUGGLE
AND THE
ORIGIN OF RACIAL SLAVERY:
The Invention of the White Race

by

THEODORE WILLIAM ALLEN

Edited with an Introduction
by
Jeffrey B. Perry

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Theodore W. Allen's other writings include *The Invention of the White Race*, 2 vols. (Verso, 1994 and 1997), "Can White Radicals Be Radicalized?" (1969), "White Supremacy in U.S. History" (1973), and "White Blindspot" (1967), which was co-authored under the pseudonym J. H. Kagin with Noel Ignatin [Ignatiev]. Available on the internet at *Cultural Logic* are Theodore W. Allen, "Summary of the Argument of the Invention of the White Race" (Parts 1 and 2), at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen.html> and <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen2.html>; Theodore W. Allen, "On Roediger's *Wages of Whiteness*," at <http://clogic.eserver.org/4-2/allen.html>; Jeffrey B. Perry, "In Memoriam: Theodore W. Allen (1919-2005)," at <http://clogic.eserver.org/2005/Perry.html>; and "An Interview with Theodore W. Allen" by Greg Meyerson and Jon Scott, at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen interview.html>.

This article is an edited version of the pamphlet *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* published by the Hoboken Education Project (which was coordinated by Sean Ahern, Tami Gold, Becky Hom, Jeffrey B. Perry, and others) in 1975 and by HEP and The New England Free Press in 1976. It was also recently published by the Center for Study of Working Class Life, SUNY Stony

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Brook, Michael Zweig, Director, as *Theodore W. Allen, Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race, Edited with an Introduction by Jeffrey B. Perry* (Stony Brook, NY: Center for the Study of Working Class Life Edition, 2006). It is a slightly expanded form of a talk originally presented February 23, 1974, at the New Haven meeting of the Union of Radical Political Economists (URPE). With an abridgement of footnotes it appeared as "'They Would Have Destroyed Me': Slavery and the Origins of Racism," in *Radical America*, Volume 9, no. 3 (May-June, 1975), pp. 40-63. It is also based in part on the unpublished Theodore W. Allen, "Toward an Integral Theory of United States History (Ten Theses)," 1974.

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Allen, Theodore W.
The class struggle and the origin of racial slavery.

SUMMARY: A treatment of racial slavery as a response to class struggle and of the consequences for the entire working class.
Includes bibliographical references.

1. U.S. History-colonial period.
2. Indentured servitude.
3. Bacon's Rebellion.
4. Position of Afro-Americans in 17th Century Virginia.
5. Origin of racial slavery and racism.
6. Early capitalist economy.
7. Slavery as capitalism-slaves as proletarians.
8. Joint struggles of European and African bond servants.
9. Invention of the "white" race.

INTRODUCTION

To the 2006 Edition of

Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race

   Theodore W. Allen's pioneering historical work *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* was first published as a Hoboken

Education Project pamphlet in 1975. Its bold and innovative main thesis -- *that the "white race" was invented as a ruling class social control formation in response to labor unrest manifested in the latter (civil war) stages of Bacon's Rebellion (1676-77) --* opened the floodgates for an outpouring of subsequent studies on the "white race." The groundswell was such that by 1997 the Stanford University professor George M. Frederickson would assert "the proposition that race is 'a social and cultural construction,' has become an academic cliché."[1]

Allen, however, was not an academic; he was a class conscious, anti-white-supremacist, working class intellectual and activist, who had researched and written on the historical development of the "white race" for twenty-five years, and he was not comfortable with the proposition that Frederickson described.[2] As he explained in his internet-published "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*" -- viewing "race as a social and cultural construction" has value in "objectifying 'whiteness,' as a historical rather than a biological category," but it is "an insufficient basis for refutation of white-supremacist apologetics." The apologetics, or arguments, that Allen had in mind were from those who would argue that such social constructs are somehow natural or genetically determined. He stressed that "the logic of 'race as a social construct' must be tightened and the focus sharpened" and "the 'white race' must be understood, not simply as a social construct (rather than a genetic phenomenon), but as a *ruling class social control formation*."[3]

This position is consistent with Allen's repeated efforts to challenge what he considered to be the two main arguments that undermine and disarm the struggle against white supremacy in the working class:

1. the argument that racism is innate, and
2. the argument that European-American workers benefit from racism.

The first argument is associated with the "unthinking decision" explanation for the development of racial slavery offered by historian Winthrop Jordan in his influential, National Book Award-winning, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*. The second argument is associated with historian Edmund S. Morgan's similarly influential, triple-award-winning, *American Slavery, American Freedom,* which maintains that, as racial slavery developed, "there were too few free poor [European-Americans] on hand to matter."[4]

Morgan, a past president of the Organization of American Historians and recipient of the 2000 National Humanities Medal for "extraordinary contributions to American cultural life and thought," went even further in *American Slavery, American Freedom* and in his 1972 article "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox." In these writings he offered a master narrative, which Allen described as "an assessment of white supremacism in relation to the foundation of the United States as a republic in a positive light." Its essence, to Allen, was "the thesis . . . that democracy and equality as represented in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of 1789, were, . . . made possible by racial oppression"; or, as Morgan stated it, "the slavery of Afro-Americans made possible, indeed was essential for, the emergence of the notion of equality as the fundamental constitutional principle of the United States." Allen considered Morgan's thesis to be both inaccurate and a hindrance to the struggle against white supremacy.[5]

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Allen was convinced, however, that it was not enough to simply counter Morgan's thesis and the arguments that racism is innate and that workers benefit from racism. What was needed, he concluded, was "a self-standing completely opposite theory."[6] That is the task that *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* begins. Allen's new theory is built, as he explains, on "three essential bearing-points" that challenge both Jordan and Morgan and "from which it cannot be toppled":

> First, racial slavery and white supremacy in this country was a ruling-class response to a problem of labor solidarity. Second, a system of racial privileges for white workers was deliberately instituted in order to define and establish the "white race" as a social control formation. Third, the consequence was not only ruinous to the interests of the Afro-American workers but was also "disastrous" . . . for the white worker.[7]

* * *

Theodore W. "Ted" Allen (1919-2005) was born in Indiana and "proletarianized by the Great Depression" in Huntington, West Virginia. He joined the American Federation of Musicians Local 362 at 17, and quickly became a delegate to the Huntington Central Labor Union, AFL. He subsequently worked as a coal miner in West Virginia as a member of the United Mine Workers locals 5426 (Prenter), 6206 (Gary) where he was an organizer and Local President, and 4346 (Barrackville). He also co-organized a trade union organizing program for the Marion County West Virginia Industrial Union Council, CIO, did industrial economic research at the Labor Research Association, taught economics at the Communist Party's Jefferson School (in the 1940s and 50s), and taught math at the Crown Heights Yeshiva in Brooklyn and the Grace Church School in New York.

Over his last forty years, while living at the edge of poverty in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, he worked as a factory worker (in a bottling factory, box factory, and a light metal working shop), retail clerk, mechanical design draftsmen, postal mail handler (and member of Local 300 of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union), librarian (at the Brooklyn Public Library), and independent scholar. While researching and writing *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* he also taught as an adjunct history instructor for one semester at Essex County Community College in Newark. Throughout his entire adult life he worked for the emancipation of the working class and for socialism.[8]

In 1966, during what he described as "the changed ambience of the African American Civil Rights struggle . . . [and] the peace movement," Allen began his historical research. He was inspired by insights from W. E. B. Du Bois in *Black Reconstruction* that the South after the Civil War "presented the greatest opportunity for a real national labor movement which the nation ever saw" and that the organized labor movement failed to recognize "in black slavery and Reconstruction" could be found "the kernel and meaning of the labor movement in the United States." Allen's work focused on a historical study of three crises in United States history in which there were general confrontations between the forces of capital and those from below. The crises were those of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Populist Revolt of the 1890s, and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Drawing again on Du Bois and his notion of the

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blindspot of America, which Allen paraphrased as "the white blindspot," he described the role of the theory and practice of white supremacy in shaping the outcomes of those struggles.9

In his historical writing Allen argued against what he referred to as the "old consensus" on U.S. labor history. That consensus attributed the low level of class consciousness among American workers to such factors as the early development of civil liberties, the heterogeneity of the work force, the "safety valve" of homesteading opportunities in the West, the ease of social mobility, the relative shortage of labor, and the early development of "pure and simple trade unionism." He challenged this "old consensus" as being "seriously flawed . . . by erroneous assumptions, one-sidedness, exaggeration, and above all, by white-blindness." He also countered with his own theory -- that white supremacy, reinforced among European-Americans by "white skin privilege," was the main retardant of working class consciousness in the United States and that efforts at radical social change should direct principal efforts at challenging the system of white supremacy and "white skin privilege."10

Allen developed the analysis in his three crises research into a still unpublished book-length manuscript entitled "The Kernel and the Meaning: A Contribution to a Proletarian Critique of United States History" (1972), which argued that "white supremacism was the Achilles heel of the labor, democratic, and socialist movements in this country." It was in the course of this work, and after publication of Jordan's influential *White Over Black*, that he became convinced that the problems related to white supremacy couldn't be resolved without a history of the plantation colonies of the 17th and 18th centuries. His reasoning was clear -- white supremacy still ruled in the United States more than a century after the abolition of slavery and the reasons for that had to be explained. The racism-is-natural argument associated with Jordan would not do. Allen proceeded to search for a structural principle that was essential to the social order based on enslaved labor in the continental plantation colonies and was still essential to late twentieth-century America's social order based on wage-labor.11

Over the next twenty-five years he did extensive primary research in the colonial records of pattern-setting Virginia and generated important (though still unpublished) book-length manuscripts including "The Genesis of the Chattel-Labor System in Continental Anglo-America" and "The Peculiar Seed: The Plantation of Bondage," both of which dealt with the reduction of laborers and tenants to chattel-bond-servitude (a status under which workers could be bought and sold as chattel). This reduction was done primarily, at first, among European-American workers in 17th century Virginia.12

In *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery* Allen lays the basis for a class-conscious, anti-white-supremacist, counter narrative of American history. It would be, as he explained, a narrative that offered "a new and consistent interpretation of colonial history and the origin of racial slavery" with significant implications "for interpreting all subsequent periods" of United States history.13

Important components of Allen's interpretation that are found in *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery* and developed more fully in *The Invention of the White Race* include the following concepts (with locations in the *Class Struggle* text noted in parentheses):

■ Throughout much of the seventeenth century conditions in Virginia were quite similar for Afro-American and Euro-American laboring people and the "white race" did not exist. (n. 63)

■ There were many significant instances of labor unrest and solidarity in Virginia, especially during the 1660s and 1670s, and it is of transcendent importance that "foure hundred English and Negroes in Arms" fought together demanding freedom from bondage in the latter stages of Bacon's Rebellion. (sections 1 and 2)

■ The "white race" was invented as a ruling class social control formation in response to the labor unrest in the latter (civil war) stages of Bacon's Rebellion of 1676-77. (sections 4 and 8 and n. 63)

■ The "white race" was developed and maintained through the systematic extension of "a privileged status" by the ruling class to European-American laboring people (sections 4 and 8 and n. 63) who were not promoted out of the working class, but came to participate in this new multi-class "white" formation.

■ The non-enslavement of European-American laborers was the necessary pre-condition for the development of racial slavery [the particular form of racial oppression that developed in the continental plantation colonies]. (section 4)

■ The "white race" social control formation, racial slavery, the system of white supremacy, and white racial privileges were ruinous to the class interests of working people and workers' "own position, vis-à-vis the rich and powerful . . . was not improved, but weakened, by the white-skin-privilege system." (sections 9 and 10 and n. 63)

■ Slavery in the continental colonies was capitalism (n. 13), the slaveholders were capitalists, and the chattel bond servants (including those enslaved), were proletarians. (section 2)14

All of these concepts, as well as discussions on comparative slavery, the development of a sociogenic approach to race, the nature of racial oppression, and the role of the social control buffer are developed more fully in Allen's two-volume *The Invention of the White Race* (1994, 1997) and in his easily accessible "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*."15

In his last years Allen was near completion of his final major work, a book length manuscript entitled "Toward a Revolution in Labor History," which was to be a reinterpretation of United States labor history shaped by his understanding of racial oppression and its centrality to American history. In that work Allen challenges what he calls the prevalent assumptions of American labor historiography -- that only free labor can be "proletarian," that the African American workers' two centuries of struggle against slavery isn't "labor" history, and that "American labor history" is essentially the story of European-American workers with African Americans playing a marginalized, auxiliary role in "the class struggle." "Toward a Revolution in Labor History" again

argues that the main barrier to class consciousness in the U.S. is "the incubus of 'white' identity of the European-American workers."16

Shortly before his death, Allen, as both an intellectual and an activist, posed four basic challenges for the work ahead:

1. To show that white supremacism is not an inherited attribute of the European-American personality.

2. To demonstrate that white-supremacism has not served the interests of the laboring-class European-Americans.

3. To account for the prevalence of white-supremacism within the ranks of laboring-class European-Americans.

4. By the light of history, to consider ways whereby European-American laboring people may cast off the stifling incubus of "white" identity.17

The importance of these tasks and of Allen's work over his last forty years make clear that *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* should be viewed not only as a pioneering work in the study of the "white race," but also as a seminal contribution toward a class conscious, anti-white supremacist, interpretation of United States history.

Jeffrey B. Perry
27 April 2006
New York, New York

Notes

1 Theodore W. Allen, *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* (Hoboken: Hoboken Education Project, 1975), pp. 5, 19 n 63; George M. Frederickson, "America's Caste System: Will it Change? *New York Review of Books* (23 October 1997), 68-75, quote p. 68. For more on Allen's thesis see Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, Vol. I: *Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York: Verso, 1994) and Vol. II: *The Origin of Racial Oppression in Anglo-America* (New York: Verso, 1997); Theodore W. Allen, "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*: Part 1," *Cultural Logic*, Vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring 1998) # 8 at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen.html>; and Theodore W. Allen, "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*: Part 2," *Cultural Logic*, Vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring 1998) # 113 at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen2.html>.

2 "An Interview with Theodore Allen" by Greg Meyerson and Jon Scott, *Cultural Logic*, Vol. I, no. 2 (Spring, 1998) at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen%20interview.html>.

3 Allen, "Summary . . . Part 1," #'s 6, 7 and 8.

4 Allen, "Summary . . . Part 1," #'s 7-8 and "Summary . . . Part 2," # 129 and n. 197; Theodore W. Allen, "Slavery, Racism, and Democracy," *Monthly Review*, Vol. 29, no. 10 (March 1978), pp. 57-63; Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), Chapter 2, "Unthinking Decision: Enslavement of Negroes in America to 1700," pp. 44-98, esp. p. 80; Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1975), pp. 380, 386; Theodore W. Allen, to Louis M. Rabinowitz Foundation, February 15, 1976, p. 3, in possession of author. Morgan's book won awards from the Society of American Historians, the Southern Historical Association, and the American Historical Association.

5 See Allen, to Louis M. Rabinowitz Foundation, p. 3; Allen, "Slavery, Racism, and Democracy," p. 58; Allen, *Class Struggle*, p. 5; Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, 386, 387; Edmund S. Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 59, no. 1 (Jan., 1972), pp. 5-29, esp. p. 5; Allen "Summary . . . : Part 2," # 132; "Past Officers: Organization of American Historians," at <http://www.oah.org/about/pastofcrs.html>; and "Edmund S. Morgan: Sterling Professor Emeritus," <http://www.yale.edu/history/faculty/morgan.html>.

6 Theodore W. Allen, "On Roediger's *Wages of Whiteness*," *Cultural Logic*, Vol. 4, no. 2 (Spring 2001) at <http://clogic.eserver.org/4-2/allen.html> # 6.

7 Allen, *Class Struggle*, p. 19 n 63. Special thanks to Sean Ahern, an original Hoboken Education Project member, for reviewing this introduction and edition and emphasizing the importance of this point.

8 Allen, to Rabinowitz Foundation, p. 9; Theodore W. Allen, Application for Admission to Goddard College Graduate Program," 20 October 1974, pp. 1-5, in possession of author; Theodore W. Allen, Statement of Theodore William Allen in Support of His Request . . . to . . . Goddard College, 21 December 1974, in possession of author.

9 W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935), pp. 353, 377; Theodore W. Allen, "The Kernel and the Meaning: A Contribution to a Proletarian Critique of United States History" (1972 [first draft version 1967]), in possession of author; J. H. Kagin [pseudonym for Theodore W. Allen and Noel Ignatin (Ignatiev)], *White Blindspot* (Oswatomie Associates, 1967); Ted [Theodore W.] Allen, "Can White Workers Radicals be Radicalized?" in Noel Ignatin [Ignatiev] and Ted [Theodore W.] Allen, *White Blindspot & Can White Workers Radicals Be Radicalized?* (Detroit: Radical Education Project and New York: NYC Revolutionary Youth Movement, 1969), pp. 12-18. J. H. Kagi (1835-1859) was a largely self-educated abolitionist who was killed in the John Brown-led raid on Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, October 17, 1859. He was listed as Secretary of War and second in command to Brown in the provisional

government.

10 Allen, "The Kernel and the Meaning," p. 41 and Allen, "Can White Workers Radicals Be Radicalized?" pp. 12-14.

11 Theodore W. Allen, "History of My Book," 3 July 2001, in possession of author and Theodore W. Allen, "Development of the Labor Movement - 1 (Part 1 - 1607-1750)," Outline of the Course (Fall 1974), p. 1, in possession of author.

12 Theodore W. Allen, "The Genesis of the Chattel-Labor System in Continental Anglo-America," (n. p., 1976), in possession of author and Theodore W. Allen, "The Peculiar Seed: The Plantation of Bondage," (n. p., 1974, 1976) in possession of author.

13 Allen, to Rabinowitz Foundation, p. 3.

14 Allen, to Rabinowitz Foundation, p. 2 and Allen, "Was It Capitalism?" 8 June 1996, in possession of author, p. 1, explain that in the plantation colonies the means of production were monopolized by one class, non-owners were reduced to absolute dependence upon the owners and could only live by the alienation of their labor, the products of the plantations took the form of commodities, and the aim of production was the accumulation and expansion of capital. On the deleterious effects of white supremacy for the working class see also Allen, "Slavery, Racism, and Democracy," p. 60; Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, II: 246-55; Allen, "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*," Part 2, #s 119-123; Theodore W. Allen, "Discussion Materials: Session V-What Price 'whiteness'?" (n.p., 1974), pp. 22-28, in possession of author; Allen, "Can White Workers Radicals be Radicalized?" pp. 15-18; and Ted [Theodore W.] Allen, "The Most Vulnerable Point" (Harpers Ferry Organization, New York: 1972), pp. 2-4.

15 Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, Vols. I and II; Allen, "Summary of the Argument of *The Invention of the White Race*," Part 1 at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen.html> and Part 2 at <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-2/allen2.html>.

16 Theodore W. Allen, "Toward a Revolution in Labor History: Outline of a book to be written by Theodore W. Allen," 5 January 2004, in possession of author.

17 Allen, "On Roediger's *Wages of Whiteness*," at <http://clogic.eserver.org/4-2/allen.html> # 67.

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A Note from the Author

of

Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery:

The Invention of the White Race

"After twenty more years of research and study"

"Now, after twenty more years of research and study, except for the correction of an inconsequential error in the last paragraph, but two [typographical changes] of the text, and the corresponding amendment to note 97, no change has been made in this pamphlet. If I were to re-write it . . .; no I *am* rewriting it -- in expanded form -- as the second of two volumes on *The Invention of the White Race*. . . .

Theodore William Allen
August 6, 1994

A Note From The Editor

This second edition of Theodore W. Allen's *Class Struggle and the Origin of Racial Slavery: The Invention of the White Race* is based on the 1975 Hoboken Education Project pamphlet of that title. The only changes from the original publication and a 1976 reprint are those suggested by the author above, typographical and style-consistency corrections made by the editor, and one parenthetical insert of an Allen review.

Allen's pioneering historical work on the invention of the "white" race paved the way for subsequent "white race" study and laid the basis for his influential two-volume *The Invention of the White Race (*Vol. I: *Racial Oppression and Social Control* [Verso: 1994] and Vol. II: *The Origin of Racial Oppression in Anglo-America* [Verso: 1997]). It also serves as a cornerstone for the class conscious, anti-white supremacist interpretation of United States history that he sought to help develop.

CLASS STRUGGLE
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ORIGIN OF RACIAL SLAVERY:

The Invention of the White Race

by Theodore William Allen

In the period before the Civil War, one of the standard arguments made for racial slavery was that it made possible a practically air-tight system of social control. The strife-torn and ism-riddled plight of wage-labor societies in Europe was contrasted with the long tradition of social peace in the South, where, despite intramural grudges, the great majority of the poor whites would side with the slave-holders in any confrontation between black labor and the plantation bourgeoisie.[1]

The high courts of South Carolina well understood that "the peace of society . . . required that slaves should be subjected to the authority and control of all freemen when not under the immediate authority of their masters"; that where "a slave can invoke neither Magna Charta nor common law," social peace depended upon "the subordination of the servile class to every free white person."[2]

If the black bond-laborer sought to flee, any white person had the legal right, indeed duty, to seize the fugitive, and stood to be rewarded for the deed. "Poor white men," writes one historian, "habitually kept their eyes open for strange Negroes without passes, for the apprehension of a fugitive was a financial windfall."[3]

Chancellor William Harper of South Carolina confidently reassured those who were apprehensive of another Santo Domingo in the American slave states. "It is almost impossible," he wrote, "that there should be any extensive [insurrectionary] combination among the slaves." The reason was simple: "Of the class of freemen, there would be no individual so poor or so degraded (with the exception of here and there a reckless outlaw or felon) who would not . . . be vigilant and active to detect and suppress it."[4]

"We do not govern them [the free states] by our black slaves but by their own white slaves. We know what we are doing-we have conquered you once and we can again. . . ."

John Randolph of Virginia, opposing the
Missouri Compromise of 1820[5]

The pioneer slaveholding sociologist George Fitzhugh described in terms even more

explicit the role of the poor whites in the social order established by and for the plantation bourgeoisie. "The poor [whites]," he said, "constitute our militia and our police. They protect men in the possession of property, as in other countries; and they do much more, they secure men in the possession of a kind of property which they could not hold a day but for the supervision and protection of the poor."6 Here Fitzhugh has perfected our definition of racial slavery. It is not simply that some whites own blacks slaves, but that no whites are so owned; not simply that whites are by definition non-slaves, but that the poor and laboring non-slave-holding whites are by racial definition enslavers of black labor.

Contrast the serene sense of power expressed by Fitzhugh and Harper in the nineteenth century with the troubled mind of the seventeenth-century planter elite at the time of Bacon's Rebellion. "How miserable that man is," wrote Sir William Berkeley to his friend Thomas Ludwell, "that Governes a People where six parts of seaven at least are Poore, Endebted, Discontented and Armed."7 Since 1642, whenever kings had reigned in England, Berkeley had served as Royal Governor over Virginia, which then had two-thirds of the total population of the South. Now in the last year of his time, he was to be driven from his home, his capital city was to be burned, and most of his territory was to be taken over by armed rebels.

"While the workingmen, the true political power of the North, allowed slavery to defile their own republic, while before the Negro, mastered and sold without his concurrence, they boasted it the highest prerogative of the white-skinned laborer to sell himself and choose his own master, they were unable to attain the true freedom of labor. . . . "

Karl Marx, letter to Abraham Lincoln, 18658

Colonel Francis Moryson, who had served many years in the government of Virginia, and who for that reason was chosen as one of the King's Commissioners to inquire into the state of affairs of the colony in the aftermath of Bacon's Rebellion, expressed wonderment that in Virginia, "amongst so many thousand reputed honest men there should not be found a thousand to fight five hundred inconsiderable fellows."9 He could only conclude that "the major part of the country is distempered."

To understand how the anxiety of the Berkeleys and the Morysons was transformed into the self-assurance of the Harpers and Fitzhughs, is to understand the origins of racial slavery in this country.10

I I

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, Virginia and Maryland, the tobacco colonies, experienced a severe and protracted economic crisis.11 It was a period of intense class struggle, including armed struggle, of the people against the bourgeoisie. It was in Virginia that these events reached their fullest development. There, the proletariat -- one-fourth to one-half of the population12 -- was the most consistent combatant of all the poor and oppressed masses struggling to throw off capitalist domination.13 These proletarians were politically more advanced, as indeed were the other rebelling colonists, than even the Leveller left wing of the Revolution in the Mother country,

England.[14] But the most significant fact of all, from the present point of view, is that the Afro-American and European-American proletarians made common cause in this struggle to an extent never duplicated in the three hundred years since.

From the time of the 1663 Servants' Plot for an insurrectionary march to freedom, to the tobacco riots of 1682, there were no fewer than ten popular and servile revolts and revolt plots in Virginia.[15] The decisive encounter of the people against the bourgeoisie occurred during Bacon's Rebellion, which began in April 1676 as a difference between the elite and the sub-elite planters over "Indian policy," but which in September became a civil war against the Anglo-American ruling class.[16]

When Bacon's forces besieged, captured, and burned the colonial capital city of Jamestown and sent Governor Berkeley scurrying into exile across the Chesapeake Bay, the rebel army was composed mainly of European and African bond-servants and freedmen recently "out of their time."[17]

After Bacon's death, late in October, the rebel cause declined due to faltering leadership. The eleven hundred British troops that were sent in eleven ships to aid the Governor's cause did not leave England until around December first, and they did not arrive in Virginia until the shooting was over.[18] But armed English merchantmen were employed with effect on the rivers to harry the rebels. The captain of one of these ships was Thomas Grantham, whose policy of unabashed deception and lying, combined with exploitation of class differences among the rebels, played a decisive role in bringing about a final defeat of the rebels in January, 1677.[19] Despicable as his role was, Grantham's account of his exploits is a historical record of the most profound significance.[20]

Grantham procured the treachery of the new rebel general, Laurence Ingram (whom Grantham had known before), and Ingram's Lieutenant, Gregory Walklett,[21] to help him in securing the surrender of the West Point garrison of three hundred men in arms, freemen and African and English bond-servants. A contemporary account says, however, that

> . . . the name of Authority had but little power to ring the sword out of these Mad fellows' hands . . . [and therefore Grantham] resolved to accost them with never to be performed promises" [of pardon for the freemen and freedom for the bond-servants, African and English].[22]

Then Grantham tackled the main stronghold of the rebel forces, three miles further up the country, and, in Grantham's own words:

> "I there met about foure hundred English and Negroes in Arms who were much dissatisfied at the Surrender of the Point, saying I had betrayed them, and thereupon some were for shooting me, and others for cutting me in peeces: I told them I would willingly surrender myselfe to them, till they were satisfied from his Ma[jes] tie, and did engage to the Negroes and Servants, that they were all pardoned and freed from their Slavery: And with faire promises and Rundletts of Brandy, I pacified them, giving them several) Noates under my hand . . . Most of them I persuaded to goe to their Homes, which accordingly they did, except about eighty Negroes and

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twenty English which would not deliver their Armes. . . ."23

Grantham tricked these one hundred men on board a sloop with the promise of taking them to a rebel fort a few miles down the York River. Instead, towing them behind his own sloop, he brought them under the guns of another ship and forced their surrender, although "they yielded with a great deal of discontent, saying had they known my resolution, they would have destroyed me."24 Grantham then proceeded to disarm these last of the rebels and to deliver them to their respective owners.

The transcendent importance of this record is that there, in colonial Virginia, one hundred and twenty-nine years before William Lloyd Garrison was born, the armed working class, black and white, fought side by side for the abolition of slavery.

III

The bourgeoisie had succeeded in crushing the revolt, as they were again able to do, but only with great difficulty, in the tobacco riots six years later.25 All this, however, was merely a defensive action; their basic problem remained and was more pressing than ever: The securing of an increasing supply of plantation labor and the establishment of a stable system of social control for its maximum exploitation.

The supply of labor could be increased in two ways: by increasing the number of bond-servants, and by lengthening their time of service. From the standpoint of maximum 'profit the ultimate step would seem to have been to combine these two approaches to the fullest extent, to tap all possible European and African sources and to extend the period of servitude to life. This, of course would have required the resort to forced transport of European as well as African bond-servants.

On the basis of perpetual servitude the 250,000 African laborers brought to the southern colonies up to 1790 had developed into a bond-servant population of 650,000.26 On the same basis, the importation of thirty-eight thousand European life-long bond-servants would have been sufficient to develop more than the maximum number, never more than 100,000, that were actually used in the southern colonies.27 Perpetual servitude, furthermore, afforded the plantation capitalist important incidental benefits aside from the extension of the period of service. The children of these bond-servants would belong to the master, as lifelong bond-servants; the women would work in the fields along with the men; deprived of all civil rights, they would be more completely exploitable; and the benefits of improved labor skills, where they developed, would accrue exclusively to the master, not at all to the servant.28

The sale price of life-time bond-servants was almost twice the price of limited-term bond-servants.29 But even at a doubled price, 38,000 European bond-servants sold into perpetual bondage like that of the Africans, would have cost only one-half to two-thirds as much as what the plantation bourgeoisie actually paid for the 125,000 to 150,000 European bond-servants they did import.30

How are we to account for this deviant behavior of the class whom Shakespeare mocked in Timon's satiric economium to glittering gold, and who practiced so religiously the folk wisdom about a penny saved, a penny got? This brings us to the hard part of the question, "Why racial slavery?" The hard part is, not "Why were

African bond-servants reduced to perpetual servitude?" but "Why were European bond-servants not reduced to perpetual servitude?"[31]

IV

Domestic political and economic considerations would have made it impossible to impose such a policy as a general thing in England. But, a policy of forced transportation to perpetual servitude, restricted to convicts only, in England, and to Irish and Scottish rebels, "vagrants," and "rogues," and the extension to life of the terms of all such categories of servants already in the colonies, would not have imperiled the fundamental ruling power of the bourgeoisie in England. If this course was not followed, it was not for reasons of social order in England, but of the establishment of a system of social control in the unique conditions of the plantation colonies. The Anglo-American bourgeoisie did not make slaves of black and white together because it was not in its power to do so in the historical context. To have attempted to do so would have put in mortal jeopardy what power it did have, considerable as that power was. The non-slavery of white labor was the indispensable condition for the slavery of black labor. This is no mere conjecture; it is a fact that the events of Bacon's Rebellion, and of the whole turbulent quarter-century following 1660, made unmistakably clear.

The defeat of the popular forces in this struggle cleared the way for the distinctive southern plantation system. In that economy the disparity of wealth and social power between the few grandees and the great mass of the dependent poor was much more developed than in the rest of the country; and the middle-class presence was correspondingly weak and insignificant. Under these circumstances, the plantation bourgeoisie established a system of social control by the institutionalization of the "white" race whereby the mass of poor whites was alienated from the black proletariat and enlisted as enforcers of bourgeois power.

V

The most common form of resistance to bond-servitude was to run away.[32] English and Africans working side by side in the field or in the tobacco shed plotted their escape, met at their rendezvous, and fled to freedom together.[33] The Assemblies of all the plantation colonies enacted cruel and vicious penalties for such "stealth of oneself." The form of corporal punishment most commonly used was flogging and branding, but mutilation and even death were legal retribution against the captured fugitive. The most common form of penalty, because it was most profitable to the owners, was to extend the period of service; for each day away, added service of two days in Virginia, seven in South Carolina, and ten in Maryland.[34] But by the law of 1661, if, in Virginia, any English bond-servant ran away in company with any African life-time bond-servant, the English bond-servant would have to serve the penalty time twice, once for his own absence and once for the African's.[35]

Another, most elementary and human, form of servant solidarity was marrying without the consent of the master. Not only did the marriage impose some barrier to extremes of exploitation, but it led to "lost" time when a wife became pregnant. For this "offense" there were severe legal penalties. The usual penalty was a year's extension of time for marrying and a year for a pregnancy. The children of bond-servants were themselves bond-servants until they were over twenty years of age. But the heaviest

penalties were those for white women who bore children where the father was African. For those women the penalty was as much as seven years of extended service and a severe whipping at the public whipping post, with the child to be a bond-servant until thirty-one years of age.[36]

This policy was generalized on the largest scale in connection with Bacon's Rebellion itself. Governor Berkeley condemned Bacon and his followers as rebels and traitors when the rebellion was primarily a quarrel among white planters over "Indian policy." Berkeley captured Bacon, then pardoned him and gave his blessing to an anti-Indian campaign. But when, in the second phase, the rebellion became directed primarily against the elite and, as it necessarily had to do, united black and white bond-servants and free poor, Berkeley, in victory, treated the captured rebel leaders with such vengeful severity as was said to have evoked from King Charles II, his sovereign, the remark that "that old fool has hang'd more men in that naked country than I did for the Murther of my Father."[37] T. H. Breen notes the same pattern: "Had Bacon somehow confined his dispute to the upper class, he might have been forgiven for his erratic behavior, but once the servants, slaves and poor free-men became involved, he had to be crushed."[38]

However, special repressive measures for specific acts of solidarity by whites with blacks were not sufficient. The social turbulence of the time showed that the unifying effect of the common lot of bond-servants was stronger than the divisive effect of the penalties for specific illegal acts. Edmund S. Morgan makes a perceptive comment in this connection: "It is questionable (he writes) how far Virginia could safely have continued . . . meeting discontent with repression and manning her plantations with annual importations of servants who would later add to the unruly ranks of the free . . . There was another solution which allowed Virginia's magnates to keep their lands, yet arrested the discontent and repression of other Englishmen. . . ."[39]

VI

The shift to African labor was precipitate after 1685, the newly rechartered Royal African Company, with the unsolicited aid of the interlopers, now making England the world leader in the traffic in human beings. Stressing the importance of "a trade so beneficial to the Kingdom," the Lords of Trade and Plantations adjured the governors of all the American colonies to see to "the well supplying of the Plantations and Colonies with negroes at reasonable prices."[40] The result was that the number of African lifetime bond-servants in 1708-09 in the three main southern colonies exceeded the number of European bond-servants by 12,000 (tithables) to none in Virginia, 4,657 to 3,003 in Maryland, and 4,100 to 120 in South Carolina.[41]

Now a new note is heard; the terms "deficiency laws," "quota," and "the need for white servants," appear with increasing frequency in the records. "White servants rarely come of late," said one of William Penn's trustees, "and consequently the country is in danger of becoming a country of negroes.[42] The Council of Trade and Plantations urged the King to direct the colonial governors to enforce strictly "the acts for increasing the number of white men in their colonies. . . ."[43] The King, William of Orange, complied just seven days later.[44] On October 8, 1698, South Carolina enacted its first "deficiency law" providing penalties for plantation owners who failed to maintain a ratio of at least one white bond-servant for every six male Negroes above sixteen years of age on each

plantation.45 Governor Francis Nicholson reported in 1698 his concern that in Maryland and Virginia the ratio of African bond-servants to English bond-servants had risen as high as six or seven to one.46 The Council of Trade and Plantations voiced similar fears that in Jamaica, in 1709, the plantation owners were not maintaining their required "quota" of white men to African bond-servants, in spite of the fact that each plantation owner was liable to a fine of five pounds sterling for every three months and for every white bond-servant of his "deficiency."47 The editor of the Calendar of State Papers for 1716-1717 makes the general comment that "Everywhere the problem of increasing the white population by means of the import of indentured labor was coming to the fore."48

Turn, and turn again. First prefer white labor, then black labor, now white labor again. Why? Of course these European bond-servants were to be exploited, and heavily exploited, on the plantations. That point was made repeatedly. To cite one example, in 1682, "Sundry merchants possessing estates in America" were anxious lest the enforcement of the anti-kidnapping laws in England inhibit the flow of bond-servants to the colonies. They urged consideration of the fact that "every white man's work at tobacco for a year is worth £7 (seven pounds sterling) to the king."49 That was just the part of the profit that went to the king, and did not include the profits of the planters, shipmasters and merchants. When we note that European bond-servants were selling at less than three pounds per year of unexpired term and that their maintenance came to practically nothing, we can see how remunerative their exploitation was for the owners.50

But labor is labor, smoke the pipe or sniff the snuff; taste the sugar or rice. You cannot tell whether African, English or Irish labor made it for you. The renewal of interest in white men for bond-servants was, therefore, not due to any special qualities of their labor power, in which they were the same as the Africans.

VII

The reason was simple. The special demand for white servants was now primarily to "people the country," to serve in the militia, to serve as a basic means of social control based on the perpetual and hereditary bond-servitude of Africans and Afro-Americans. There are literally scores of documents in the records of the time which attest to this fact. I mention a few.

The same letter from merchants possessing estates in Virginia and Maryland made the point that they "have no white men to superintend our negroes, or repress an insurrection of Negroes. . . ." The Council of Trade and Plantations reported to the King on September 8, 1721 that in South Carolina "black slaves have lately attempted and were very near succeeding in a new revolution . . . and therefore, it may be necessary . . . to propose some new law for encouraging the entertainment of more white servants in the future. The militia of this province does not consist of above 2,000 men."51 In his preface to volume sixteen of the Calendar of State Papers, Fortescue writes that by 1697-98, "The system of defense by white servants had broken down." "The defense of the West Indies," he tells us, "depended, apart from the fleet, entirely on the militia, which was composed of white servants."52 But the island plantation colonies were finding it impossible to hold European servants once their time was out because of the strict limits of land available for occupation by freedmen. The record is

replete with dire pronouncements on the consequences of the relatively small and diminishing number of white men in those islands. In 1688, the Governor of Barbados complained of the Quaker planters' failure to maintain their fair share of the number of white bond-servants "required to suppress the danger of an insurrection by negroes."53 The Governor of Jamaica wrote to the Prince of Wales on 24 September 1716 that his island was ". . . almost defenceless, as well from the want of white people to prevent any insurrection of the Negroes, as ships-of war to secure the coasts, trade and navigation. . . ."54 The House of Commons, on November 3, 1691, received "a petition of divers merchants, masters of ships, planters and others, trading to foreign plantations . . . setting forth, that the plantations cannot be maintained without a considerable number of white servants, as well to keep the blacks in subjection, as to bear arms in case of an invasion."55

Parliament, in 1717, responded to these cries of alarm by making transportation to bond-servitude in the plantation colonies a legal punishment for crime. Persons convicted of felonies, for which the death penalty could be imposed, could instead be sentenced to fourteen years' transportation to the American plantations. Persons convicted of lesser offenses were liable to seven years' servitude. A study cited by A. E. Smith, for the years 1729-1770, indicated that at least seventy per cent of those convicted in the Old Bailey court in London were sent to Maryland and Virginia. Thenceforth "His Majesty's passengers" constituted a large proportion of the white bond-servant population in the southern plantation colonies, being a majority of those arriving from England. Nevertheless, the majority of the total number of European bond-servants coming to the southern colonies (including those who originally disembarked at Philadelphia or other non-South ports) were, for the greater part of the eighteenth century, Irish, Germans, and Scots.56 Aside from convicts, the number of European bond-servants in Maryland more than doubled between 1707 and 1755.57 Whereas the number of white servants in Virginia in 1708 was negligible, Governor Gooch reported to the home government that great numbers of bond-servants, white as well as black, had been imported into that colony since 1720.58 Separate bond-servant statistics are lacking for South Carolina, except for 1708, when out of a population of nearly ten thousand, there were only 120 European bond-servants.59 However, it is generally agreed that a majority of the Europeans coming to the colonies were bond-servants; therefore, as the white population of South Carolina increased from 4,000 to 25,000 between 1708 and 1755, the white-servant immigration must have amounted to several thousand.60

VIII

The bourgeoisie could get European bond-servants to come to the southern colonies,61 but how was it to avoid another Bacon's Rebellion or Servants' Plot in which African and European bond-servants would join in challenging the ruling elite? How was the bourgeoisie to turn that old situation around, break up the solidarity of black and white, and then enlist the poor whites in the social control apparatus of the ruling class? Professor Morgan, at one point in the article previously cited, comments as follows: "I do not mean to argue that Virginia deliberately turned to African slavery as a means of preserving and extending the rights of Englishmen."62 Quite right; but reverse the order of the clauses and you have a profoundly correct statement: The plantation bourgeoisie deliberately extended a privileged status to the white poor of all categories as a means of turning to African slavery as the basis of its system of production.

The seventeenth-century Anglo-American plantation bourgeoisie drew the color line between freedom and slavery, a line that had not previously existed under English custom or law.63 James C. Ballagh, in his well-known old essay, *A History of Slavery in Virginia*, first published in 1902, detailed how the Virginia Assembly, "in a long series of . . . statutes . . . first drew and applied the color line as a limit upon various social and political rights, and finally narrowed its application definitely to the negro race with respect to liberty and customary or legal privileges and rights."64 This drawing of the color line was accomplished by defining who was to be a slave; then, of course, everybody else would be by definition a non-slave. The process took place over a period of nearly half a century.

In 1662 the Virginia Assembly decreed that all persons born in Virginia were to follow the condition of the mother. This was a direct result, according to Ballagh, of "fornication" of Englishmen with Negro women; but it was also intended as a "deterrent to the female" English.65 For, as the historian Philip Bruce put it, "It is no ground for surprise that in the seventeenth century there were instances of criminal intimacy between white women and negroes. Many of the former had only recently arrived from England, and were therefore comparatively free from . . . race prejudice . . . ."66 It was in this connection that the very first legislative enactment of white-skin privilege for white labor was passed when, by excluding white women bond-servants from the list of taxable persons, the Assembly provided for the general exemption of white women bond-servants from field work. In 1662 interracial fornication by "Christian" men was made punishable by a fine double the amount otherwise imposed for that offense.67 In 1705 a white servant woman became liable to five years added servitude for this offense, and the son or daughter born in result of the "crime" was to be a bond-servant until he or she became thirty-one years of age.68

After 1670, baptism in Christ in Virginia was to have no emancipative effect in this world. But this left still free those Negroes who came from Spanish, Portuguese or English territory already baptized. In 1680, therefore, the Virginia Assembly decreed that imported servants were slaves unless they had been born of Christian parents in a Christian land and first purchased by a Christian.69 That seemed to cover all contingencies, except for the limited-term black bond-servants, free Negroes and Indian slaves. In 1705, the last step was taken: All servants who were *brought into* the country, by sea or land, were to be slaves, unless they came as three-star Christians as specified in the 1680 law. Only blacks were slaves, not Indians, in Virginia.70

There remained the question of the free persons of color. But their position was clearly defined as one of a lower status than any white person. In 1705, for instance, the law forbade any Negro to own any white servant.71 In 1723, free Negroes, who had until then been voters on the same basis as whites, were deprived of this right.72 Some years later, Lieutenant Governor William Gooch justified this and other special deprivation of rights to free Afro-Americans: The purpose, he explained, was "to fix a brand on free negroes and mulattoes . . . (because) a distinction ought to be made between their offspring and the descendants of an Englishman." He deplored the "pride of a manumitted slave, who looks upon himself immediately on his acquiring his freedom, to be as good a man as the best of his neighbors." Gooch was determined to break that simple pride, and "to preserve . . . a distinction between them (free Negroes) and their betters." The Council of Trade and Plantations in England, who had asked the question, indicated its satisfaction with the answer.73

19

The white-skin privileges of the poor free whites were simply reflexes of the disabilities imposed on the Negro slave: to move about freely without a pass; to marry without any upper-class consent; to change employment; to vote in elections in accordance with the laws on qualifications; to acquire property; and last, but not least, in this partial list, the right of self-defense.

Not only the free whites, but the white bond-servants were given privileges in relation to the African. In 1680 the Virginia Assembly repealed all penalties that had been imposed on white servants for plundering during Bacon's Rebellion. The language of the act implicitly excluded from this benefit any Afro-American freedmen or limited-term bond-servants who had taken part in the Rebellion.[74] Negro children were made tithable, hence workable, at twelve years of age, while white bond-servants were exempt until they were fourteen.[75]

In 1680, Negroes were forbidden to carry arms, defensive or offensive.[76] In 1705, the specified freedom dues for a white bond-servant included a musket.[77] In 1680, the law provided that any Negro who raised his or her hand against any Christian white would be liable to receive thirty lashes, well laid on.[78] Under the law of 1705, a white servant raising a hand against the master, mistress or overseer was liable to an extension of a year of his or her servitude.[79] Under the same law, the killing of an Afro-American life-time bond-servant was legal if the bond-servant resisted "correction" by the master or his agent.[80] Here is a classic clear distinction between race and class oppression.

In 1680, it was made legal to kill a fugitive Negro bond-servant if he or she resisted recapture.[81] In 1705, the law specified that a white servant might not be whipped naked except by order of a Justice of the Peace. The same law gave the white bond-servant the right to seek legal redress against the master for severity of treatment or for inadequacy of provisions.[82]

In 1705, white bond-servants, upon completion of their terms of servitude, were to receive under the law the following freedom dues: men, 10 bushels of corn, 30 shillings in money, and a musket worth 20 shillings; women, 15 bushels of corn and 40 shillings in money.[83] The Afro-American laborers were not to receive freedom dues, since they were not to have freedom.[84]

IX

In 1692, representatives of Virginia in England made the point that Virginia and Maryland, being on the continent, could not keep the bond-servants under control so simply as the authorities could do on the island colonies of the West Indies with the help of the fleet.[85] From Virginia reports of insurrectionary plots by Negroes became frequent.[86] The editor of the *Calendar of State Papers* describes Virginia in 1728-29 as "a community filled with anxiety and in constant dread" on this account.[87]

The experience of Bacon's Rebellion had shown that the continental colonies were too far from England to be controlled by troops based in the Mother Country.[88] The Crown was unwilling to maintain at its own expense a permanent army in the colonies for this purpose. Although the plantation owners on some occasions appealed for British troops for the maintenance of order against the rebellious population, they were unwilling to pay the cost.[89] Increasingly, therefore, the colonial governments concerned

themselves with the development of the white militia.90

From almost the beginning, members of the colonial ruling elite and their key agents, auxiliaries, and employees were generally exempted from militia duty. The Act of 1705 thus excused "Any present or past member of the colony council, speaker of the house of burgesses, attorney-general, justice of the peace, or any person who has borne commission of captain or higher in the colony, ministers, clerks, schoolmasters, overseer of 4 or more slaves, constable, miller. . . ."91 Under that law bond-servants were also excluded from the militia. In 1723, however, when exempts were in each instance required to find and furnish "one able white man" for a substitute, no specific exclusion of bonded servants was provided in regard to those who might serve as substitutes. In fact, it was provided that "nothing in this Act contained, shall hinder or deter any captain from admitting any able-bodied white person, who shall be above the age of sixteen years, to serve in his troop or company in the place of any person required by this act to be enlisted."92

By 1727, the special form of militia known as the slave patrol was established in Virginia to deal with the "great dangers that may . . . happen by the insurrections of Negroes. . . ."93 The patrols were to be appointed by the chief militia officer in each county, and employed for the purpose of "dispersing all unusual concourse of negroes . . . and for preventing any dangerous combinations which may be made amongst them at such meetings."94 The poor white men who constituted the rank and file of the militia were to be rewarded for this service by such things as exemption from attendance at regular militia musters, and for payment of taxes and parish levies.95 An article in the Act of 1727 that especially catches the attention is the one that specifies the militia pay-scale in pounds of tobacco according to rank.96 The poor whites when on patrol duty were to receive pay according to that scale. And paid for what? -- to crush plots and rebellions such as their own grandfathers may have taken part in along with black bond-servants fifty years before.

<div align="center">X</div>

But their own position, vis-a-vis the rich and powerful-the matter that lay at the root of that old civil strife-was not improved, but weakened, by the white-skin privilege system. That system, after all, was conceived and instituted as an alternative method to that of Grantham and Berkeley, but with precisely the same aims and same effect. On that we have the most unimpeachable testimony.

In 1831, less than a hundred miles from the spot where the "foure hundred English and Negroes in Armes" had wanted to shoot Berkeley's mendacious Captain, or cut him in pieces, there occurred that brief proletarian uprising known as Nat Turner's Rebellion. That event sent a premonitory shudder through the frame of the United States ruling plantation bourgeoisie. It brought to the surface thoughts and dreads not ordinarily spoken. All that winter and spring of 1831-32 the Virginia Legislature and the press debated the meaning and possible consequences of this battle cry of labor enslaved. They were looking to their defenses, and they talked much of the poor whites.

T. J. Randolph, nephew and namesake of the author of the Declaration of Independence, put the rhetorical question to his fellow legislators: ". . . upon whom is to fall the burden of this defense (against slave-proletarian revolts): not upon the lordly

masters of their hundred slaves, who will never turn out except to retire with their families when danger threatens. No sir, it is to fall . . . chiefly upon the non-slaveholders . . . patrolling under a compulsory process, for a pittance of seventy-five cents per twelve hours. . . ."

George W. Summers of Kanawha County made many in the House of Delegates wince. "In the character of Patroles," he said, the poor white ". . . is thus made to fold to his bosom, the adder that stings him." Summers, of course, was as opposed as all the rest of the members to freeing the poor white of "the adder" by establishing equality of black and white labor in Virginia.

"Civis," an Eastern Virginia slaveholder, pointed out that in his part of the state more than half the white minority had "little but their complexion to console them for being born into a higher caste." The editor of the *Richmond Enquirer* spoke more wisely than he intended of the status of the white workers: ". . . forced to wander vagabonds around the confines of society, finding no class which they can enter, because for the one they should have entered, there is substituted an ARTIFICIAL SYSTEM of labor to which they cannot attach themselves."[97]

Profoundly true! The artificial, i.e., unequal, system of labor preventing them from "entering" their own class by "attaching themselves" to the proletarian class struggle.

In these Virginia debates we hear published to the world the social degradation that a century and a half of white supremacy had brought to the poor whites, who had forgotten those blood-vows sworn by the triumphant light of the Jamestown fire, and in the gloaming waiting for Grantham.

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FOOTNOTES

1 Examples: George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! Or Slaves Without Masters*, in Harvey Wish, ed., *Ante-Bellum Writings of George Fitzhugh And Hinton Rowan Helper* (Boston, 1960), p. 55. J. H. Hammond, "Letters on Slavery-No. 4," *De Bow's Review*, vol. 8 (old series) March, 1850, p. 256.

2 H. M. Henry, *Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina* (Emory, 1914), p. 11, citing Nott and McCord (Law): Witsell vs. Parker; and 2 Strobhart (Law), 43: Ex parte Boylston.

3 Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution* (New York, 1956), p. 153.

[4] E. N. Elliott, ed., *Cotton Is King and Pro-Slavery Arguments* (Augusta Georgia, 1860; rpt. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), p. 608.

[5] Cited in: Charles Buxton Going, *David Wilmot, Free Soiler* (1924; New York, 1966), p. 170.

[6] George Fitzhugh, *Sociology of The South* (Richmond, 1854) p. 143. This is what is meant by racial slavery. It is not simply that some whites own black slaves, but that no whites are so owned; not simply that whites are by definition non-slaves, but that the poor and laboring non-slaveholding whites are by racial definition enslavers of black labor.

[7] Berkeley to Ludwell, July 1, 1676, *Bath Manuscripts*, vol. LXXVII, folio 145. (Henry Coventry papers at Longleat) American Council of Learned Societies British Mss. Project, Reel 63 (Washington: Library of Congress). (Hereinafter noted as *Bath Mss.*)

[8] Karl Marx, letter to Abraham Lincoln, "Address of the International Workingmen's Association to Abraham Lincoln," published January 7, 1865, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Letters To Americans 1848-1895* (1953; International Publishers, NY, 1969), p. 66.

[9] Francis Moryson to William Jones, Attorney-General, October, 1676. Great Britain Public Record Office, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial* (hereinafter abbreviated, *C. S. P.*), vol. 9 (1675-76) pp. 480-81.

[10] Edmund S. Morgan and T. H. Breen have recently made notable contributions to an integral theory of early colonial history by suggesting a connection between the social turbulence in Virginia between 1660 and 1682, including Bacon's Rebellion, and the establishment of racial slavery. (See Edmund S. Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," *Journal of American History*, vol. 59, no. 1 (June, 1972), pp. 5-29; and T. H. Breen, "A Changing Labor Force and Race Relations in Virginia, 1660-1710," *Journal of Social History*, 7 (Fall, 1973), pp. 3-25. It seems to me, however, that their efforts fail fundamentally to establish that connection, and their well-begun arguments trail off into unhelpful, indeed misleading, speculations. This essay is an attempt, by a re-sifting of familiar materials in a different light, to discover that crucial link. [For Allen's review of Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1975) see Theodore W. Allen, "Slavery, Racism, and Democracy," *Monthly Review*, vol. 29, no. 10 (March, 1978), pp. 57-63 -- J.P.]

[11] Lewis C. Gray, assisted by Esther Katherine Thompson, *History of Southern Agriculture To 1860*, (Washington, 1932), pp. 262-269. Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Planters of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1959), pp. 89-91. Warren M. Billings, "'Virginia's Deplored Condition,' 1660-1676, The Coming of Bacon's Rebellion" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Northern Illinois, June, 1968), p. 155.

[12] In 1671, out of a total population of 40,000 Virginia had 8,000 bond-servants (6,000 Europeans and 2,000 Africans). In the early 1680's the population reached around 50,000, including 15,000 bond-servants (12,000 Europeans and 3,000 Africans). See *Historical Statistics of The United States: Colonial Times to 1957*, (Washington, 1960),

Table z-19. James C. Ballagh, *A History of Slavery in Virginia* (Baltimore, 1902), p. 10. Wertenbaker, op. cit., p. 98). All authorities discount Thomas Culpeper's estimate (*C. S. P.*, vol. 11, p. 157) of "seventy or eighty thousand" as the total population of Virginia at the end of 1681. But all concur that there was a very large increase in the proportion of bond-servants between the two dates. (Wertenbaker, *op. cit*., pp. 98-99. Ballagh, loc. cit.; Phillip Alexander Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in The Seventeenth Century,* 2 vols. [New York, 1896], vol. 2, p. 79). A. E. Smith, *White Servitude and Convict Labor in America, 1607-1776* (Chapel Hill, 1947), pp. 330, 336) is a possible exception since he finds the statistics for the end of this period unreliable. Besides the bond-servants, the proletariat included the propertyless freemen. Morgan *(op. cit.,* p. 20) cites a letter from Thomas Ludwell and Robert Smith to the king, June 18, 1676, estimating that one-fourth of the freemen in Virginia owned no land.

13 The "slavery-as-capitalism" school of American historians includes W. E. B. Du Bois, Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, Lewis C. Gray, Roger W. Shugg, Carl N. Degler, and Winthrop D. Jordan. Eric Williams and C. L. R. James view Caribbean slavery in the same light. Karl Marx invariably referred to the American plantation economy as capitalist enterprise. If one accepts this view, there is no reason for denying that the slaveholders were capitalists-a plantation bourgeoisie-and the slaves were proletarians. Of course, that form of labor was a contradiction of the basic requisites of general capitalist development -- a contradiction that was purged away in the American Civil War. The fact remains that for a time that form of labor was not a barrier to rapid capitalist accumulation, but its main engine Finally -- academic considerations aside -- the question of who is or who is not a proletarian has absolutely no significance except in relation to the class struggle conducted by propertyless laborers against their capitalist exploiters. Such laborers constituted the majority of the rebels in the civil war phase of Bacon's Rebellion, and of the entire population of the plantation colonies.

14 The levellers were small property owners. Their program, as expressed in their 1648 "Agreement of the People," explicitly called for the exclusion of wage-workers -- a majority of the English population -- from the franchise. One of the Acts of the "Bacon" Assembly of June 1676 was to restore the right to vote to propertyless freeman, a right that had been specifically withdrawn by the Assembly of 1670. (W. W. Hening, *Statutes- at-Large of Virginia,* 11 vols. [Richmond, 1799-1814], vol. 2, pp. 280, 346. Hereinafter this work will be noted as follows: [vol. no.] Hening [page no.].)

15 Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labor in Early America* (New York, 1947), pp. 172-177. Richard Morton, *Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill, 1960), pp. 224-225.

16 Wilcomb E. Washburn, *The Governor and the Rebel,* (Chapel Hill, 1957), pp. 70-71. Morton, *op. cit.,* p. 260.

17 George M. Chalmers Collection, Letters Relating to Virginia, I, folio 49, New York Public Library, letter from Virginia, dated September 19, 1676. In addition to this Chalmers item, Washburn (op. cit., p. 209) cites a letter in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, dated November 14, 1676, from Andrew Marvell to Sir Henry Thompson, attesting to the presence of "Servants and Negroes" in the attack on Jamestown.

18 Charles M. Andrews, ed., *Narratives of the Insurrections, 1675-1690* (New York,

1915), pp. 102-103.

19 For this service, the Privy Council awarded Grantham 200 pounds sterling. Three other captains were given lesser sums. (*Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series*, 11 June and 19 March, 1679, vol. I [1908], pp. 838 and 814-815.)

20 Captain Grantham's "Account," *Bath Mss.*, vol. cited, folios 301-302.

21 Andrews, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-94, 140. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, vol. 19 (1677-78) p. 115.

22 Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

23 Grantham's "Account."

24 *Ibid.*

25 *C. S. P.*, vol. 11 (1681-85) pp. 130, 134, 228-229, 277. Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

26 Henry C. Carey, *The Slave Trade, Domestic and Foreign* (Philadelphia, 1853), estimated the number of African bond-laborers imported up to 1790 to be 264,000. Gray, (op. cit., p. 354) seems to favor this count and Richard B. Morris, *Encyclopaedia Of American History* (New York), p. 513, appears to accept Carey's figures. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade-A Census* (Madison, 1969]) p. 72, on the basis of "recent authorities," suggests a figure of 275,000. Ninety-three per cent of the African bond-servants were in the South in 1790. Assuming that 93% of them were originally brought to the South, the Carey and Curtis figures indicate that the number brought to the South was between 244,000 and 259,000.

27 Of all the plantation colonies, Maryland had the greatest proportion of European bond-servants. There they constituted about ten per cent of the population. (Eugene I. McCormac, *White Servitude in Maryland, 1634-1820* [*Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, series xxii, Nos. 3-4 (March-April, 1904)], pp. 29, 32-33, 111; A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 336.) On the basis of a total European-American population of 1,166,000 in the southern colonies in 1790 (Morris, op. cit., p. 513), therefore, we can assume that not more than 100,000 were bond-servants, and that the number had never been greater. While the number of European bond-servants may have peaked before 1790, for the purposes of this speculation, that fact is offset by the fact that they were present in relatively large numbers before the African bond-servants were.

28 See Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

29 Gray, *op. cit.*, pp. 370-371. Wertenbaker, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

30 Based on the assumption that at least a half, and probably a larger proportion of the European bond-servants went to the southern colonies. (See A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, "Appendix," especially, "Conclusion," pp. 335-337.)

31 Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black* (Chapel Hill, 1968), pp. 48, 91, suggests this

same question and makes the unsupported assumption that the plantation owners could have enslaved non-English Europeans if the owners had been able to conceive of such a monstrous transgression against white Christian fellowship. Since I am here occupied in presenting positive theses, I leave polemics aside. Just one note: "White-over-white" perpetual slavery was instituted in Britain, for Scots coal miners and salt-pan workers, in 1606, a year before Jamestown was founded, and it was not completely ended until 1799. Only objective difficulties, not moral or racial principles, prevented a wider practice of the system and eventually were decisive in bringing about its discontinuance. See "Slavery in Modern Scotland,*" Edinburgh Review,* vol. 189 (1899), pp. 119-148. John Ulrich Nef calls that essay "the most important treatment of the subject." (John Ulrich Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industr*y [London, 1932], p. 157.)

32 A. E. Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 261. James C. Ballagh, *White Servitude in the Colony of Virginia* (Baltimore, 1895), pp. 52-53. McCormac, op. cit., p. 48. Warren B. Smith, *White Servitude in Colonial South Carolina*, (Columbia, 1961) p. 74.

33 *York County Records, 1674-76*, pp. 206, 221, Virginia State Library, Richmond. Bruce, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 104. A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 265, 269.

34 A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 267. The quaint phrase, "stealth of oneself," is cited in McCormac *(op. cit.*, p. 62) from a seventeenth-century Maryland law on runaways.

35 2 Hening 26. Thomas Cooper, ed., *Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1839) vol. 3, p. 17. Warren B. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76. The details of the law varied from colony to colony and, from time to time, in each colony. For this essay, Virginia, the first and pattern-setting southern colony, furnishes most of the examples, the dates of the various acts being given. "The discovery of the great resource of profit in raising tobacco," wrote Ulrich B. Phillips ["Plantation and Frontier," in Eugene D. Genovese, ed., *The Slave Economy of the Old South* (Baton Rouge, 1968), p. 3], "gave the spur to Virginia's large-scale industry and her territorial expansion . . . (and) brought about the methods of life which controlled the history of Virginia through the following centuries and of the many colonies and states which borrowed her plantation system." In another article republished in the same volume, Phillips states that ". . . the legislation of Virginia was copied with more or less modification by all the governments from Delaware to Mississippi." ("Racial Problems, Adjustments and Disturbances," pp. 26-27).

The most important secondary sources on European bond-servants in Colonial America are A. E. Smith, *Colonists in Bondage: White Servitude and Convict Labor in America, 1607-1776* (Chapel Hill, 1947); Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labor In Early America* (New York, 1947); and Marcus W. Jernegan, *Laboring and Dependent Classes in Colonial America, 1607-1783* (Chicago, 1931). Other useful specialized studies for this essay have been E. I. McCormac, *White Servitude in Maryland, 1634-1820* (Baltimore, 1895); and Warren B. Smith, *White Servitude in Colonial South Carolina* (Columbia, 1961).

36 A. E. Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 272.

37 Andrews, op. cit., p. 40. Historians generally regard this quotation as apocryphal. Nevertheless it is a true statement; Berkeley hanged 23 rebel captives while Charles II

hanged a total of 13 (not counting Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw, whose dead bodies were exhumed for hanging) for the regicide of his father. (Morris, *Encyclopaedia of American History*, p. 23. *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* "Regicide.")

38 Breen, *op. cit.,* p. 10.

39 Morgan, *op. cit.,* p. 24.

40 *C. S. P.,* vol. 23, p. 718 (15 April 1708).

41 *Ibid.,* vol. 24, pp. 156-158, 739; vol. 23, p. 759.

42 *Ibid.,* vol. 29, p. 272 (18 March 1717).

43 *Ibid.,* vol. 16, p. 101 (10 February 1698).

44 *Ibid.*

45 Cooper, vol. 11, p. 153.

46 *C. S. P.,* vol. 16, pp. 390-391.

47 *Ibid.,* vol. 24, p. 454.

48 *Ibid.,* vol. 29, p. vii.

49 *Ibid.,* vol. 11, pp. 317-318.

50 Gray, *op. cit.,* p. 366. Bruce, *op. cit.,* vol. 2, p. 51.

51 *C. S. P.,* vol. 32, p. 425.

52 *Ibid.,* vol. 16, p. vii.

53 Ibid., vol. 12, p. 517.

54 *Ibid.,* vol. 29, p. 181.

55 Leo Francis Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliament Respecting North America,* 5 vols. (Washington, 1924), vol. 2, p. 46.

56 A. E. Smith, *op. cit.,* pp. 111-113, 117, 325-329, 335-337.

57 *Ibid.,* p. 324.

58 *Ibid.,* p. 330.

59 *C. S. P.,* vol. 24, p. 739.

60 Gray, *op. cit.,* p. 348. Wertenbaker, *op. cit.,* pp. 81-82. McCormac, *op. cit.,* pp. 28-29.

A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 325, 331-332, 336.

61 In the continental colonies, even in good times, no more than a third of the European bond-servants were able to complete their terms of service and establish themselves as independent farmers. (Wertenbaker, *op. cit.*, p. 80); by the end of the century, the proportion was only five or six per cent. (*ibid.*, p. 98). But the situation of the freedmen in the insular colonies, Jamaica, Barbados, and others, was even worse. Bond servants completing their terms there left the islands by the thousands on that account. (*C. S. P.*, vol. 7, p. 141, 14 December 1670) Those who did not succeed in getting away began to constitute a destitute proletarian "white" sub-class. The special measures enacted, or at least considered, by the Anglo-Caribbean ruling class to provide some safety margin of racial privileges in this circumstance, anticipated similar measures in the continental plantation country. Among these were the exclusion of non-whites from work as skilled tradesmen, and the extension of the franchise in order that these destitute whites might then be able to sell their votes to the bourgeois candidates at election time. (*C. S. P.*, vol. 7, p. 141, 14 December 1670; vol. 14, pp. 446-447, 16 July 1695).

62 Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

63 Which came first, racism or slavery? In the post-World War II era of national liberation upsurge, a related controversy has occupied much attention of American historians. One side, the "psycho-cultural" side, holds that white supremacy is "natural", the result of an "unthinking decision"; that it derives from human attributes not subject to effective eliminative social action. The other side, the "social" side, believes that racism arises from socio-economic, rather than natural, conditions; that (at least by implication) it is susceptible of elimination by social action.

Evidence of early instances of enslavement of Afro-Americans is stressed by the "psycho-cultural" school as proof of the "natural antipathy" of white and black. On the other hand, as Jordan (foremost of the "psycho-culturals") puts it, "Late and gradual enslavement undercuts the possibility of natural and deep-seated antipathy towards Negroes . . . if whites and Negroes could share the same status of half freedom for forty years in the seventeenth century, why could they not share full freedom in the twentieth." (Winthrop D. Jordan, "Modern Tensions and the Origins of American Slavery," *Journal of Southern History,* vol. 28 [1962], pp. 19-30, loc. cit., p. 20.

Of all the historians of the "social" school whose work I have read, only the black historian Lerone Bennett, Jr., in his article, "The Road Not Taken," *Ebony,* vol. 25 (1970), no. 10 (August), pp. 70-77, and in Chap. III of his new book *The Shaping of Black America* (Chicago, 1975), succeeds in placing the argument on the three essential bearing-points from which it cannot be toppled. First, racial slavery and white supremacy in this country was a ruling-class response to a problem of labor solidarity. Second, a system of racial privileges for white workers was deliberately instituted in order to define and establish the "white race" as a social control formation. Third, the consequence was not only ruinous to the interests of the Afro-American workers but was also "disastrous" (Bennett's word) for the white worker. Others (such as the Handlins, Morgan and Breen) state the first two points to some degree, but only Bennett combines all three.
Although I learned of Bennett's essay only in April 1975, the same three essentials have informed my own approach in a book I have for several years been engaged in writing

(and of which this present article is a spin-off), on the origin of racial slavery, white supremacy and the system of racial privileges of white labor in this country.

The comparative study of the systems of social control in the various slave-labor plantation colonies in the Americas, combined with a study of Bacon's Rebellion, its origin and aftermath, can contribute much to the resolution of the question, in favor of "deliberate choice" and against "unthinking decision." In the continental plantation colonies (Virginia was the pattern-setter) the Anglo-American ruling class drew the color line between freedom and slavery on race lines; any trace of African ancestry carried the presumption of slavery. The same Anglo-American ruling class drew the freedom-slavery line differently in Jamaica and Barbados (as did other European ruling classes elsewhere in the Americas). The poor white became not only economically, but politically and socially, marginal in the British West Indies generally. In the southern continental colonies the bourgeoisie came to base their system of social control upon the white proletarian and semi-proletarian and subsistence agricultural classes. In the southern plantation colonies the free person of any degree of African ancestry was forced into an illegal or semi-legal status, as a general rule. The same Anglo-American ruling bourgeoisie deliberately created and nurtured this group as a petit-bourgeois buffer-control stratum in the Caribbean island societies. These are all decisive differences which cannot be explained on the basis of "psychology" or "English cultural heritage."

Finally, and more important, while the Anglo-American bourgeoisie had, by their prior experience in Providence Island and Barbados, learned the profitability of equating, or seeking to equate, "Negro" and "slave," the masses of European (at that stage almost all English) bond-servants in Virginia had not accepted that point of view. Instead, they intermarried, conspired, ran away, and finally revolted in arms together with African bond-servants. Racial slavery could not have existed, and did not exist, under those circumstances. Under such circumstances, to attempt to solve the "labor problem" by increasing the number of African bond-servants, reducing them to hereditary lifetime servitude, and making them the main productive labor base of the society would have been like trying to put out the Jamestown fire with kerosene.

64 *Ballagh*, A History of Slavery in Virginia, p. 56.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

66 Bruce, *op. cit.,* vol. 2., p. 111.

67 Gray, *op. cit.,* pp. 362-363. 2 Hening 170, 296.

68 3 Hening 453.

69 2 Hening 260. Ballagh, *A History of Slavery in Virginia*, p. 47.

70 Ballagh, A History of Slavery In Virginia, p. 47. In South Carolina, in the earliest years of the colony, Indians were enslaved more extensively than was ever the case in other colonies. But this practice was, on the whole, counter-productive for a number of reasons. The Proprietors were anxious lest the practice cost the colony the services of those Indians who were serving as returners of runaway Africans. (*C. S. P.*, vol. 13, pp.

331-332, 18 October 1690) The European indentured servants were enticed with promises of land (only exceptionally realized); but no such illusions were possible for the Indians, who could only lose what land they had under the European plan. The English were, furthermore, concerned not to increase the danger of Indian collaboration with the Spanish and French. I do not share the occasionally expressed opinion that relatively few continental Indians were enslaved because of a lack of adaptability to agriculture.

71 3 Hening 449-450.

72 4 Hening 133-134.

73 *C. S. P.*, vol. 42, pp. 140, 207-208, 304.

74 2 Hening 462.

75 2 Hening 479-480.

76 2 Hening 481-483.

77 3 Hening 451.

78 2 Hening 481-482.

79 3 Hening 451.

80 3 Hening 459.

81 2 Hening 481-482.

82 3 Hening 442.

83 3 Hening 451.

84 To contrast the status accorded European and African bond-servants, is not to suggest that the life of the white bond-servant was anything other than hard and oppressive. A. E. Smith believes that "the vast majority of them worked out their time without suffering excessive (!) cruelty or want, (and) received their freedom dues without suing for them." Presumably he means the "majority" of those who survived their period of service. For, he conceded that "The system of white servitude was cruel" on account of the hard labor it imposed on persons "generally unfitted for such a life," and so much so that in the early colonial period "fifty or seventy-five out of every hundred white servants died without ever having a decent chance at survival." (A. E. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 278, 303-04.)

Morris says that the shift to main reliance upon African laborers did not bring with it an improvement in the conditions of the European bond-servants. They continued to be "subject to the severest disciplinary measures." He cites with approval Eddis' well-known comment that "Generally speaking they (the European bond-servants) groan under a yoke worse than (Biblical) Egyptian bondage." (William Eddis, *Letters From*

America, Cambridge, 1969, p. 38). Morris relates in some detail the record of more than a score of cases of brutal treatment, including murder by violent blows and deliberate starvation, rape, torture, and inducement of suicide, in which the masters with rare exception, were only lightly punished, if at all. Morris decided not to add more examples because to do so "would be to give the screw many a turn and in the long run immunize the reader by harsh repetition." (Morris, *Government and Labor ,* pp. 486-497.)

85 *C. S. P.,* vol. 15, p. 451; vol. 11, p. 130.

86 Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts*, (second edition, New York, 1969) pp. 163ff, 169ff, 176f.

87 C. S. P., vol. 36, p. xxiv.

88 The dread memory of Bacon's Rebellion was still a reference point for the plantation bourgeoisie forty years after the event. Governor Alexander Spotswood reminded the Council of Trade and Plantations of the great cost of suppressing the Rebellion, in a letter dated July 19, 1715. (*C. S. P.,* vol. 28, p. 301).

89 *C. S. P.,* vol. 11, pp. xxvi, 130, 134, 277.

90 From the time of the message of the Council of Trade and Plantations to the king, 10 January 1698, the establishment and maintenance of an adequate white militia is a recurring theme of official documents. (C. S. P., vol. 16, p. 101; vol. 22, p. 489; vol. 24, p. 450; vol. 2, p. xviii, 70; vol. 36, p. 118, are some examples.).

91 3 Hening 336.

92 4 Hening 125.

93 4 Hening 197.

94 4 Hening 202-203.

95 5 Hening 19.

96 4 Hening 202-203.

97 Randolph's speech to the Virginia House of Delegates, January 21, 1832, was published as an abolitionist pamphlet, and is available at the NYPL. Summers' speech to the House of Delegates was given four days earlier, and was printed in the *Richmond Enquirer* on February 2, 1832. "Civis's" comments appeared in the newspaper on May 4, and the reply to "Appomattox" on March 3.

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