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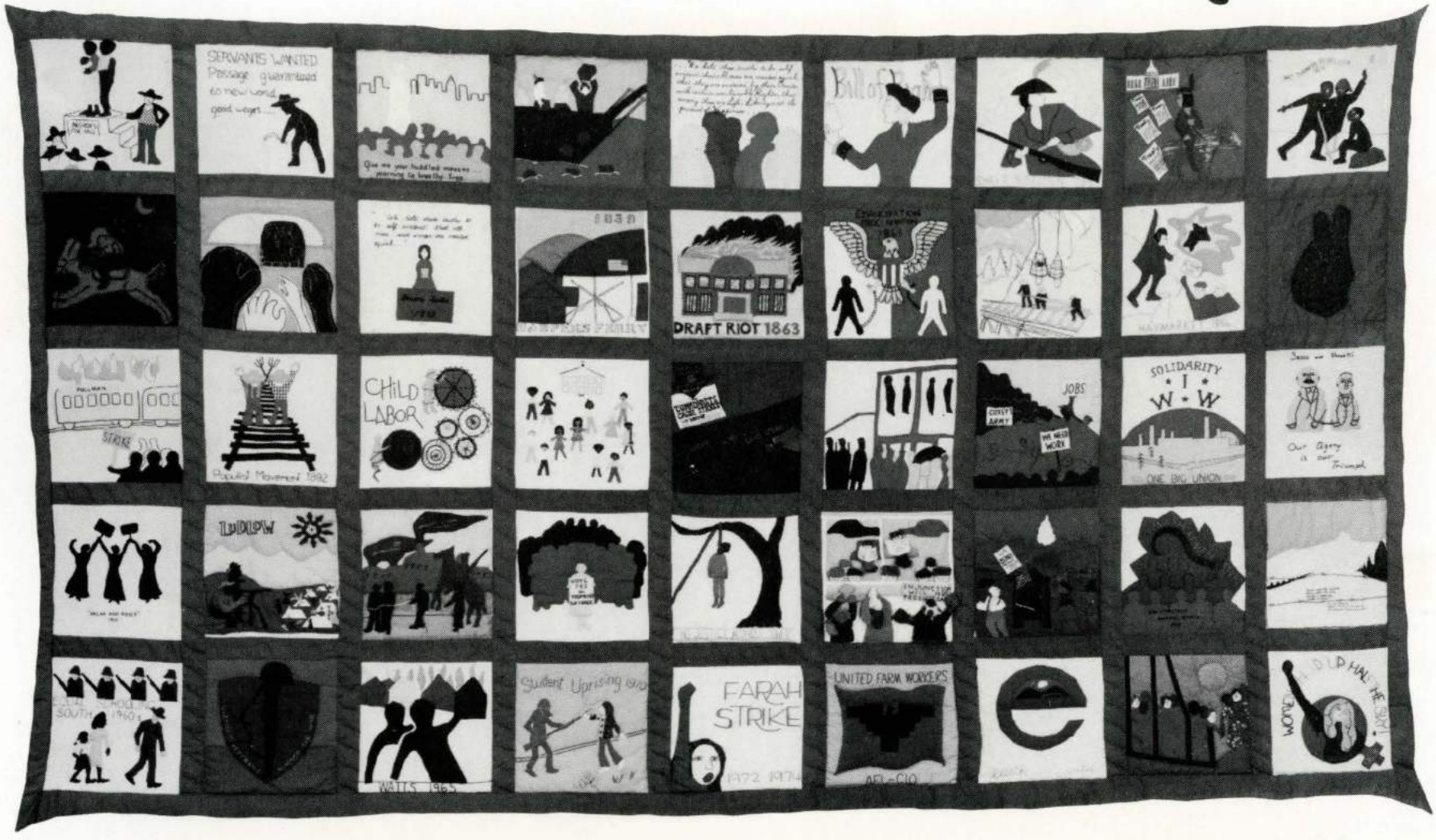
The People's BiCentennial Quilt; A Patchwork History



If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will. Men may not get all they pay for in this world, but they must certainly pay for all they get.

— Frederick Douglass

The People's BiCentennial Quilt: A Patchwork History

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FOREWORD

In the spring of 1974 a group of women of different races, backgrounds and political beliefs and from several towns gathered together to express concern over the commercialization of the Bicentennial and what we could do about it. We met at the invitation of Genny Guracar, a cartoonist and teacher of quilting. At a potluck luncheon in her home, we discussed the idea of making a Bicentennial quilt, a symbolic, tangible object of our feelings about our 200 years of history. We resented the idea of having the American Revolution sold to us in the form of "limited, luxurious editions" and plastic memorabilia. We were tired of being told by television commercials and politicians what were the "great moments" in our history and what leaders and events we should be celebrating.

All our lives we've been fed history in which minority people's struggles have either been omitted or negated, in which women have been degraded, and in which imperialist conquest, monopoly and militarism have been viewed as heroic. We wanted to portray the *people* as making history: the nameless, countless members of movements and struggles that have affected the soul and character of America. We felt there was much in American history that could unite us and inspire us in a cynical time.

We began by making a list of incidents and movements we felt were the most important to depict in our quilt. We sought to rediscover important events that were either hidden, forgotten or distorted. We wanted to show how women and men and children fought, suffered and died for rights and privileges we take for granted. While there are painful, harsh realities in our history we must face, there are also glorious triumphs and unflagging idealism throughout. We wanted to put together the story of what really happened to the American people in our two hundred year's history.

Many of us had never stitched or quilted before, but under the skillful direction of Genny we learned both craft and history from one another. Each woman chose an event or movement she wanted for her square. Often it was something she felt close to, and many of us had ancestors who were actively involved in our quilt-history. As we worked we shared impressions and experiences. Bea Keesey, the great-granddaughter of John Brown stunned us all by passing around an old worn Bible that the famous abolitionist carried with him on the fateful raid on Harper's Ferry. She recalled how her grandmother would look at what her school texts said about her father and write "Not True!" on the margins. Some of the black women from East Palo Alto, Ellen Tims, Lacey Thornton, Evelyn Chaney, Leona Miles and Vernell Halsell shared memories of the life of black people in America and portrayed in the quilt incidents of the struggle for freedom and equal rights. Marge Murphy, who is white, recalled the Newark riot of 1967, when she was badly beaten by troopers while waiting with black people at a bus stop on her way to work. The man standing next to her was killed. She was amazed afterwards to read the distorted, racist press accounts of what had happened in Newark. We discussed other incidents in which some of us had experienced things that were later misrepresented in the press and media. How will the truth of these matters ever be known?

History, after all, belongs to the people, and it will be up to us to pass it on to our children and succeeding generations.

When I volunteered to write the text for "a booklet to go with the quilt," I had no idea what I was getting into. While envisioning my task as having to write a brief explanation of each square, I found myself plunging deeper and deeper into a mammoth research project that was to change my perspective on American history for good. Many of the quilt group (which at one point we named *The People Are Us Bicentennial Quilt Committee*) gave me notes, statements and references on their squares which were of immense help. I was discovering events, people, struggles I had never heard of before, and I was overwhelmed by the enormous suffering, courage and endurance of the American people and the incredible injustices they were up against. Each square represents a moving, revealing history in itself, and as I worked, I saw how they interrelated.

Since that first meeting of the quilt group, there have been some remarkable events for future historians to ponder: Watergate, Nixon's resignation (leaving our nation for the first time with a president and vice-president we didn't elect), the final withdrawal of the U.S. from Indochina. and Senate hearings on the F.B.I. and C.I.A. which exposed assasination plots and conspiracies against the civil rights, peace and women's movements. There are many connections to be drawn from our past history and these recent events. Our past is not isolated from us, and to understand what's happening we must learn the precedents of people's struggles, government secrecy and conspiracy.

By our project we hope to inspire other community groups to celebrate American culture and history in a true revolutionary spirit. What we've covered in our Bicentennial project is far from being complete. But it's a beginning. A start in reclaiming our history and building on it.

— Connie Young Yu

NEGROES FOR SALE

. . . We have in common with all other men a natural right to our freedoms without being depriv'd of them by our fellow men as we are a free-born Pepel and have never forfeited this Blessing by aney compact or agreement whatever. But we were unjustly dragged by the cruel hand of power from our dearest friends and sum of us stolen from the bosoms of our tender Parents and from a Populous Pleasant and plentiful country and brought hither to be made slaves for life in a Christian land.

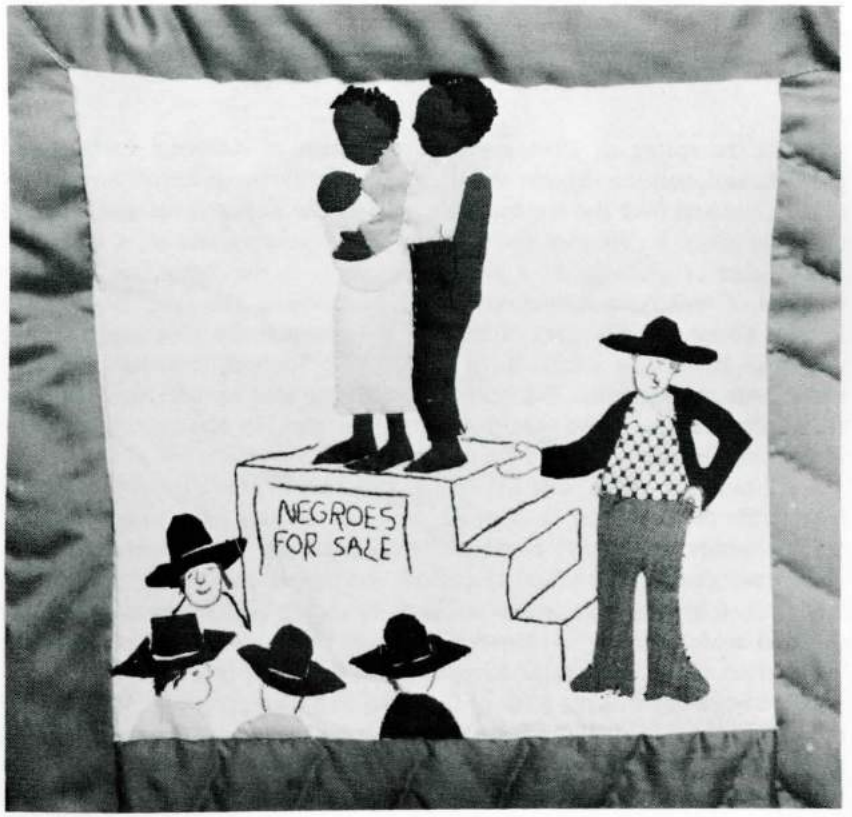
— from Petition for Freedom by Slaves, 1774

Twenty black people were brought to Virginia by a Dutch frigate to be sold as slaves over a year before the fabled occupants of the Mayflower set foot on Plymouth Rock. In 1670 Massachusetts passed a law providing that children of slaves could be sold into bondage. Slave codes were written into colonial law, and by the time the Declaration of Independence was signed, slavery was into its ninth generation in America. Washington and Jefferson owned slaves, as did many of our "founding fathers." That "peculiar institution" became part of American life.

Hundreds of thousands of slaves made the horrible "Middle Passage" to America and were crowded into the holds of ships, chained together. England dominated the slave trade, ships of the Royal African Company loading cargos of kidnapped blacks on the coast of Africa and selling the "black gold" in the New World. One ship would carry as many as 600 slaves, as traders tried to make as much profit as possible with each voyage. There was loss of lives with each shipment of slaves, many dying from disease, beatings, and lack of proper food and water. Black uprisings on the overcrowded ships made slavers resort to repressive, severely cruel measures. Two shiploads of blacks enroute to Charleston in 1807 starved themselves to death rather than be sold as slaves.

Slavery failed as an economic institution in the middle colonies, but southern colonies became dependent upon it. Crops that enriched these colonies — tobacco, rice and cotton — were grown and harvested with slave labor. Black servants were needed to run large households on plantations. Said the Reverend Peter Fontaine in 1757, ". . . to live in Virginia without slaves is morally impossible."

In some southern colonies blacks outnumbered whites, but strict and brutal codes kept the white masters from being overcome or yielding rights to the slaves. Black codes varied from place to place, but basically slaves were not allowed to leave the plantation without permission of the master, they could not assemble without the presence of a white, they could not in any way conduct themselves as free men or women.



Blacks often rebelled against their masters or ran away, risking severe beatings or death. For petty offenses slaves were whipped, branded or maimed. Young girls of thirteen or fourteen began to bear children, which were future profits for the slaveowners. Black women struggled to mother their own children while either caring for their mistress' children in the households or laboring in the fields. Lemuel Sapington testified in 1839 to the plight of slave mothers in Maryland:

> Among the gangs are often young women, who bring their children to the fields, and lay them in a fence corner, while they are at work, only being permitted to nurse them at the option of the overseer. When the child is three weeks old, a woman is considered in working order. I have seen a woman with her young child strapped to her back, laboring the whole day beside a man, perhaps the father of the child, and he not being permitted to give her any assistance, himself being under the whip.

Slaves often had to get permission of the master to get married, and husband and wife were often separated by sale. Black families fiercely resisted division on the auction block. Josiah Henson, a slave who escaped to freedom, recalled the breaking up of his family by sale:

> The crowd collected around the stand, the huddling up of negroes, the examination of muscle, teeth, the exhibition of agility, the look of the auctioneer, the agony of my mother — I can shut my eyes and see them all.
>
> My brothers and sisters were bid off first, one by one, while my mother, paralyzed by grief, held me by the hand. Her turn came, and she was bought by Isaac Riley of Montgomery County. Then I was offered to the assembled purchasers. My mother, half distracted with the thought of parting forever from all her children pushed through the crowd, while the bidding for me was going on, to the spot where Riley was standing. She fell at his feet, and clung to his knees, entreating him in tones that a mother only could command, to buy her *baby* as well as herself, and spare to her one, at least, of her little ones.
>
> Will it, can it be believed that this man, thus appealed to, was capable not merely of turning a deaf ear to her supplication, but of disengaging himself from her with such violent blows and kicks, as to reduce her to the necessity of creeping out from his reach, and mingling the groan of bodily suffering with the sob of a breaking heart? As she crawled away from the brutal man, I heard her sob out, 'Oh, Lord Jesus, how long, how long shall I suffer this way!' I must have been then between five and six years old. I seem to see and hear my poor weeping mother now. This was one of my earliest observations of men; an experience I only shared with thousands of my race.

The legacy of such tragedy, heartbreak and human suffering haunts the descendants of slaves. For black Americans, bitterness and anger remain. For whites, there is a heritage of bigotry, guilt and anguish. For all peoples in America, the early institution of human bondage is a root of continuing racial tension, violence and strife to this day.

INDENTURED SERVANTS

Run away from the Subscriber, the 4th Day of November last, a Servant Woman, aged about 28 years, fair Hair'd, wants some of her Teeth before, a little deafith, named Susannah Wells, born near Biddleford, in England: She had on when she went away, a Callico Gown, with red Flowers, blue Stockings, with Clocks, new Shoes, a quilted Petticoat, Plat Hat. Whoever secures said Servant, and delivers her to said Subscriber at Wilmington, or to Robert Dixion in Philadelphia, shall have Twenty-Five Shillings Reward, and resonable Charges paid by Robert Dixion, or Thomas Downing. [*Philad. December 4, 1740*]

— ad in Pennsylvania newspaper

Susannah Wells, running away in a Callico Gown and Plat Hat could have had many reasons for taking flight from her master. She was part of a cruel system that made her virtually a slave for 4-8 years or longer. Upon landing from England she was sold to the highest bidder who had her work to pay off the debt incurred by the passage to America. Still, Susannah was fortunate to have survived the many weeks' journey by ship which took the lives of many other passengers, either by disease such as smallpox, pneumonia or influenza, or by starvation. Susannah could have been released from the poorhouse in London, or prison, or been from such an impoverished background that being indentured into a life in an unknown land seemed like a good deal to her. But the man who bought her may have been a cruel master taking advantage of her bondage to him. Her work may have been too much for her. If she was captured, we can be sure that she was punished severely for running away.

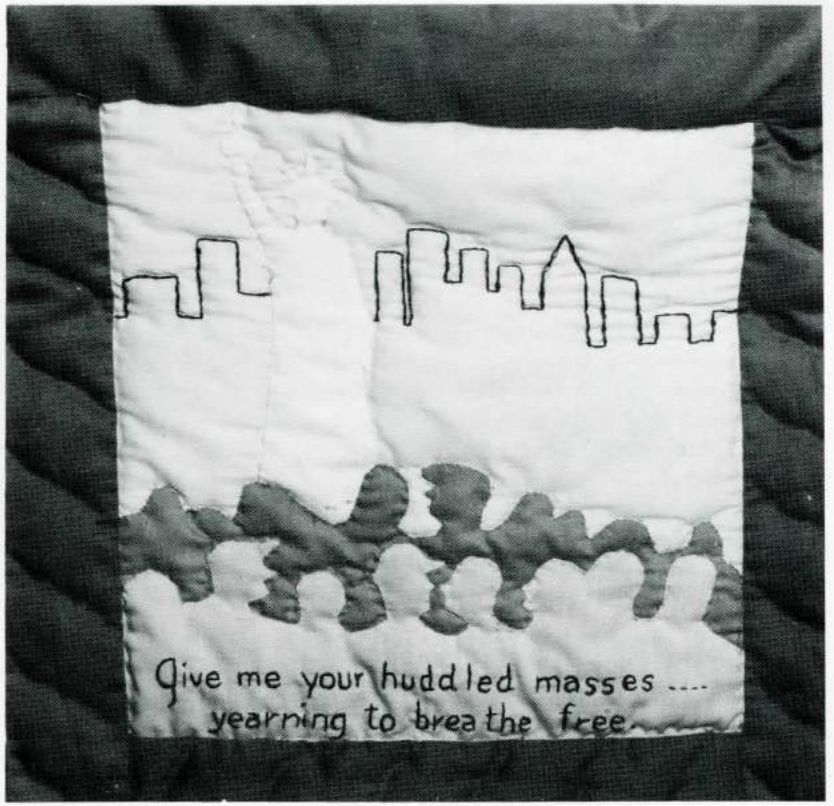
Tens of thousands of English, Irish, German and other European women and men contracted themselves to agents who paid for their passage, and they worked in servitude to pay the debt. The system of indenturing men and women was a way of solving the problem of labor desperately needed in the Colonies. It was also a way of replenishing the population diminished by disease and hard times. Some young boys were sold into bondage, kidnapped from their parents. Thousands endured the long ocean crossing, bad food and epidemics to take a chance in the New World. Many who came under the system of indenture were convicts, runaway apprentices, prostitutes, as well as people who had lost their fortunes and wanted new lives. Many were escaping from a cruel life where people were imprisoned or hung for stealing to survive.

Life in the American Colonies was difficult. Men and women, regardless of their class or background, were needed. A good portion of the population was indentured. Later on, after the Revolution, naturalization was meant only for "free, white persons," not indentured servants. But indentured servants faced a good chance of working off this bondage in a few years and making their own home in America.

Many of the early Scottish and Irish peoples came as indentured servants, and were especially adaptable to frontier life and revolutionary politics. They formed strong anti-British sentiments and were active in the Revolution. Many indentured servants were craftspeople. From 1750 to 1775 twenty thousand servants went to Maryland, twenty thousand to Virginia, and perhaps twice as many went to Pennsylvania.

Early American colonialists were a mixed group of people, hardly aristocrats, a good many not even "free." The indentured servant came with as much hope for a better life as any immigrant, and often found times in America were indeed harder than expected. Poor Susannah Wells.

IMMIGRATION



Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Send . . . the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

— inscription on Statue of Liberty

In the immigration station, I had my first surprise. I saw the steerage passengers handled by the officials like so many animals. Not a word of kindness, of encouragement, to lighten the burden of tears that rest heavily on the newly arrived on American shores.

— Bartolomeo Vanzetti

To oppressed people throughout the world, America, a youthful energetic country of boundless resources, represented the hope for the future. So they came, by the millions, first from England, Holland, Germany, Ireland, Scotland and the Scandinavian countries. As American fever spread in Western and Central Europe, millions more came from many other European countries. Most immigrants were young, and many were industrial workers, artisans, farmers and laborers, bringing new skills and expertise.

Not all found a warm welcome. One million three hundred thousand Irish Catholics came to the United States during the potato famine of 1845-6 and faced new obstacles. Better jobs advertised "Irish need not apply," and many Irish found themselves with little choice but to become laborers and servants. Jews escaping pogroms of Poland and Russia in the 1880's faced social segregation and various forms of discrimination. Italians were forced to live in crowded tenements of "Little Italy," and their labor was exploited in sweatshops and factories.

New immigrants from Southern and Central Europe and Mediterranean countries, and non-Christian immigrants from the Middle East caused a panic among those who regarded themselves bluebloods whose ancestors came on the Mayflower and other earlier boats. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge in 1896 was a vigorous proponent of a bill requiring literacy tests, saying they would protect against ". . . wholesale infusion of races whose traditions and inheritances, whose thoughts and beliefs are wholly alien to ours and with whom we have never assimilated or even been associated in the past." The poet Thomas Bailey Aldrich decried the alien "menace":

O Liberty, white Goddess: is it well
To leave the gates unguarded?

The 1917 literacy test bill required that no alien over 16 years of age who could not read English or his own language could pass beyond Ellis Island. In the early 1920s, Congress adopted a national quota system. The Immigration Restriction Act of 1921 assigned each European country a quota. By this time most Asians were already barred. The National Origins Act of 1924 cut quotas further, and shut the door completely on Japanese immigrants. Chinese immigrants suffered long detentions on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, and many were deported.

Immigration was regulated to restore the "Nordic, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant" population. The Alien Law of 1918 was designed to exclude "radicals" and nonconformists who were viewed as potential threats, and also provided that aliens at any time after entering the United States who are considered "dangerous" be deported.

Immigrants came fleeing religious and political persecution, disaster and famine. They came with hope for the future and dreams for their children. A good many did indeed find the promised land, and gave gladly of themselves to the progress of the country. Others were crushed by the new system. America, though a nation of immigrants, has never been a great "melting pot" as some would like to think. Our peoples have not blended harmoniously, and with each new group of immigrants, there has been hostility, hardship and struggle.

America is still a young nation, and new groups of immigrants continue to arrive. Despite the abolishment of the national quota system, immigration is still manipulated for economic and political reasons. Immigrants have been used for propoganda purposes as in the cases of Hungarian and Cuban refugees in the 50s. In the 70s the United States refused to take in Chilean refugees after the overthrow of Allende by the Junta (with the aid of the C.I.A.), but would give free transportation and entry to over 150,000 exiles from Vietnam after Communist victory in Indochina.

New immigrants continue to be exploited as a source of cheap labor. Prejudices against newcomers, particularly non-whites, remain. Still immigrants come, ever hopeful, and begin the struggle all over again.

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

This early incident in America's struggle for independence is probably the most celebrated act of defiance in our history.

In protesting British oppression, colonialists organized economic boycotts and demonstrations. In a climactic incident that symbolized to Americans British tyranny, five colonialists were killed and several wounded by British soldiers in 1770 in the "Boston Massacre" which enraged the populace. The first martyr of the revolution was Crispus Attucks, a black man, shot in this confrontation with British soldiers.

In 1773 the East India Company, falling into financial difficulties, sent over a number of ships carrying tea to American ports. To Americans who were avid tea drinkers, the tea represented British monopoly and interference with colonial trade and they stopped drinking it. The British ministry insisted that tea be taxed a duty of 3 pence a pound. This tax on tea, among other commodities, Americans regarded as taxation without representation, and they were determined to resist. Any Americans who tried to unload British tea or side with the king in this matter were dealt with harshly by revolutionary groups, and Tory sympathizers were threatened, beaten, and tarred and feathered.

In Boston, December 16, 1773, a group of fifty men roughly disguised as Indians boarded three ships in the harbor, broke open 340 chests of tea and dumped them into the bay. This act of trashing was applauded throughout the colonies. John Adams said of the Tea Party: "This is the most magnificent Movement of all. This is a Dignity, a Majesty, a Sublimity, in this last Effort of the Patriots that I great admire. This destruction of the Tea is so bold, so daring, so firm, intrepid and inflexible, and it must have so important Consequences, and so lasting, that I cannot but consider it as an Epoch in History."

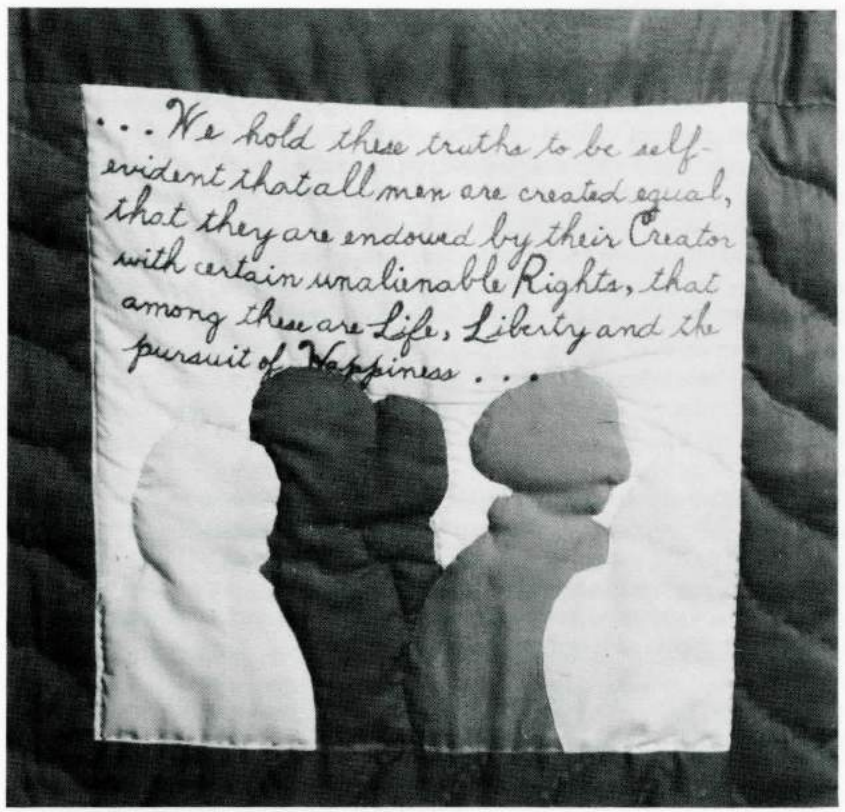
It was a rebellious act that King George and the British Parliament was determined to punish. They enacted harsh, repressive measures that further angered the colonialists, spurring them on to full-scale revolution.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

JULY 4, 1776

The bells rang, the privateers fired the forts and batteries, the cannon were discharged, and every fact appeared joyful. . .the king's arms were taken down from the State House and every vestige of him from every place. . .and burnt. . . . Thus ends royal authority in this State, and all the people shall say Amen.

— Abigail Adams, recording the reaction in Boston after the reading of the Declaration, 1776



Earlier that year Thomas Paine had written a pamphlet, *Common Sense*, which quickly sold more than 120,000 copies and eloquently expressed the need for immediate revolution. The people of the colonies were prepared to see the ideals in their hearts and minds put into action.

At the request of the Continental Congress thirty-three year old Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration with the help of Benjamin Franklin. The preamble stated the ideals of Americans, the right to revolution, to govern themselves, a radical new philosophy that shook the world.

The second part enumerates twenty-seven grievances against King George III, and the conclusion is a complete break with Britain, a formal declaration of war. In the early draft of the Declaration, Jefferson included an anti-slavery clause, accusing the King of dealing in slavery and not trying to prohibit the cruel institution in the colonies. The passage was ruled out by the southern delegation.

The Declaration was boldly signed by John Hancock, the President of the Second Continental Congress and fifty-five members of Congress, who pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. Many feared that this act of treason would result in their hangings. Abraham Clark, delegate from New Jersey dryly remarked, "Perhaps our Congress will be exalted on a high gallows."

The "Spirit of '76" as expressed in the Declaration inspired other revolutionaries around the world. Its radical principles were articulated in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, and they also inspired Spanish colonies fighting the tyranny of Spain. Abolitionists later used these concepts in their struggle against slavery. The first successful revolution against a monarchy in a Western country inspired other peoples and struck fear in the hearts of many a despot and king.

Many, many years later on another continent a leader named Ho Chi Minh, in the struggle against French colonialism in 1945 read a Declaration of Independence of Vietnam to a crowd of thousands in Hanoi, beginning: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, all men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Two hundred years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the document reads as bold and revolutionary as ever. Many Americans today are afraid to sign the document.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS

The basic freedoms of Americans are defined and protected by the first ten amendments to the Constitution known as the Bill of Rights. These amendments were proposed by members of Congress who argued that without specific guarantees the people and states would not be protected against government interference and violations of personal freedoms.

Adopted on December 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights has been the basis for law by which individuals and states have safeguarded their liberties. Minorities in America have struggled for nearly two hundred years to win the rights guaranteed in the Constitution. Political and religious groups have fought persecution by evoking the Bill of Rights, and the struggle to exercise these rights continues today. The failure of the nation to live up to the Constitution and its amendments does not negate the ideals expressed in these documents. The hopes and dreams of a better America are still embodied in the founding doctrines of the republic.

This square depicts one of the freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment, freedom of speech.

> First Amendment
>
> The fundamental freedoms that already existed in the U.S. are guaranteed. Congress is prohibited from establishing a religion, interfering with religious freedom, abridging freedom of speech or press or preventing peaceful assembly for the purpose of petitioning the government and seeking correction of grievances.

A United Farm Worker organizer once said, "Freedom of speech — we don't always get it, but it's an ideal we all have and we fight for it." Members of the Industrial Workers of the World, the "Wobblies" fought for free speech by exercising it. In some western states the First Amendment applied to everyone but the Wobblies and between 1907 — 1916 they engaged in about thirty major free speech fights. Wherever free speech was banned, they would hop a freight there and begin speaking. As soon as one Wobbly was arrested, another Wobbly would climb up on the soapbox and take his place. Some were dragged off to jail reading from the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. In many towns they won the right for anyone to speak to an assemblage on any subject.

In labor struggles, civil rights, and peace movements, the freedom of press, speech and assembly and petition were exercised and fought for. When a tenured Stanford professor, Bruce Franklin was fired from his teaching post in 1972 because the university accused him of inciting students to riot, he based his defense on the First Amendment. Judge Louis D. Brandeis, over a half century earlier in the case of Whitney vs. California concluded:

> The fact that speech is likely to result in some violence or destruction of property is not enough to justify its suppression. There must be the probability of serious injury to the state. Among free men, the deterrents ordinarily to be applied to prevent crime are education or punishment for violation of the law, not abridgements of the rights of free speech and assembly.

The American Civil Liberties Union is dedicated to upholding the First Amendment and since its founding in 1920 has defended the rights of individuals and groups to exercise our fundamental freedoms regardless of religion, politics or whatever.

SHAYS' REBELLION — 1786

In the ten years that followed the signing of the Declaration of Independence the nation suffered many growing pains. The new government was so weak that there was constant strife between the 13 states. Necessary taxes were not levied, commerce was unregulated, money was scarce and farmers could not sell their crops. People endured severe hardships during the period of postwar depression and many bartered for goods in order to survive. There was a loss of British trade. Importers and manufacturers demanded financial reforms and subsidies from Congress.

Yet 90 percent of Americans were farmers, many of them with small subsistence farms. When foreign troops had been withdrawn and the revolutionary army disbanded, the farmer lost most of his market. He found himself hounded for back interests by wartime creditors, and state legislatures began to raise taxes. Some farmers faced foreclosure. In some states paper money was issued, which soon became worthless. In Rhode Island some merchants refused to accept paper money, and the legislature passed a law whereby anyone who refused to accept the money would be found guilty of a crime without even a jury trial and fined. This law was challenged by a butcher named John Weeden (Trevett vs. Weeden) and declared unconstitutional. In New Hampshire the military was called out to disperse a mob that had surrounded the meeting house demanding members issue paper money for relief. In Massachusetts the legislature ignored the pleas of farmers for easier credit and a halt to foreclosure and levied even higher taxes. On July 31, 1786, the legislature avoided the problems of the farmers and their possible protests by adjourning until the following January 31.

It was to these intolerable conditions that a Revolutionary War veteran, Danial Shays responded. Shays like many other farmers had served bravely at Bunker Hill, and after the war became embittered by delays in army compensation, accumulation of debts and small returns for his labors at farming. The farmers had no voice in the state government. Discontented mobs attacked the civil courts where foreclosure proceedings were taking place, as well as criminal courts to prevent the trials of protestors.

Protest became insurrection when some 2,000 men under the leadership of Shays attempted to seize the arsenal at Springfield. A state militia financed by conservative merchants and landowners scattered Shays' forces at Springfield, and later on, as Shays was regrouping, he and his followers were captured. Though sentenced to hang for treason, Shays and his men were eventually pardoned to avoid fostering more bitterness and precipitating further revolt. These veterans had protested their grievances, after all, in the tradition of the Revolution they had participated in.

Shays' Rebellion shook the nation and deeply disturbed conservatives who began to agitate for a stronger central government that would prevent such uprisings. The revolt was considered inspired by leftist elements, and even in the early days of the nation, was considered a threat to be eradicated. General Henry Knox wrote Washington there were 12,000-15,000 people in the country that held beliefs that would now be considered Communist, and warned: "Their creed is, that the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of all and therefore ought to be the common property of all."

TRAIL OF TEARS

During your 200 years of American Heritage, every tribe has had its own "Trail of Tears."

— Ken Powlas

The Declaration of Independence was not meant for the original dwellers of this continent. Native Americans were referred to in the document as "savages" even though they enabled many colonial groups to survive when they first arrived on the continent. The same year as the signing of the Declaration, the new Americans broke their first treaty with Indians, one of several hundred treaties to be subsequently violated.

During the administration of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, one of the most tragic phases in Indian history took place: the forced removal of more than 125,000 Indians from their homes in the Southeast, lands which became part of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. In 1790 the government signed a treaty with Creek Indians in which the Indians ceded certain lands, but the government vowed to guarantee the remaining boundaries of the Creek Nation. In a war against the Creeks, 1813-1814, troops led by Andrew Jackson broke Creek resistance, and the Creeks were forced to cede two-thirds of their remaining lands. To Indians, the land was their mother, and they opposed the selling of their land, which was the giving up of their nation. The Shawnee chief Tecumseh said, "Sell a country! Why not sell the air, the clouds, and the great sea...Did not the Great Spirit make them all for the use of his children?"

In 1830 Andrew Jackson, the hero of Horseshoe Bend, signed the Indian Removal Bill which gave him the power to initiate land exchanges with Indian nations. The bill was aimed at evicting the powerful, intact nations of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creeks. In November 1831, 4000 Choctaw were forced to leave their territory, starting toward Arkansas in a bitterly cold winter. Their exodus was like a death march, with many dying from cold, hunger and cholera. Creeks, finding themselves invaded by greedy land speculators and bootleggers, finally accepted a removal treaty. Indians who resisted were marched off in chains.

The proud Cherokee nation held out the longest. Gold was discovered in their territories and greedy "land developers" were ready to take over. The state of Georgia passed laws aimed at negating the laws of the Cherokee nation. The Cherokees sued the State of Georgia in the Supreme Court, but the Court held the opinion that Cherokees couldn't sue as they were not a nation in the foreign sense. In 1832 Samuel Worcester and Elizur Butler, Christian missionaries, allowed themselves to be arrested for the crime of residing among Indians without a license. The case went to the Supreme Court, which found the acts of the state of Georgia in violation of treaties and the Constitution. John Marshall delivered the opinion with a vigorous denunciation of the wrongs perpetrated by Georgia upon the Indian people. While the Cherokees celebrated this favorable reversal, President Jackson refused to execute the decision of the court, saying, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it."

History books have praised Jacksonian democracy, avoiding discussion of Jackson's hatred and cruelty toward Indians. The popular ***Pocket History of the United States*** by Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager says of the seventh President: "Altogether Jackson's main creed can be summed up in a few

phrases: faith in the common man; belief in political equality; belief in equal opportunity; hatred of monopoly, special privilege, and the intricacies of capitalistic finance." His creed, of course, was not applicable to the American Indian.

In December of 1835, Jacksonian policy forced the Cherokees to cede all their eastern lands. In the winter of 1838, the Cherokees, 13,000 men, women, and children set out on their "trail of tears." They were poorly clothed for the harsh winter, given the worse provisions and the soldiers served them spoiled food which made them sick. The aged and the children were the first to perish, and at the end of the long tragic trek, one out of every four Indians had died along the way.

Even after the survivors had settled in Indian Territory under the agreement that their land never become part of the United States, their new home soon became part of the state of Oklahoma. Indians were the first victims of the United State's foreign wars, and "pacification" as a tool of genocide began with Jackson's administration. Education by missionaries, imprisonment in reservations and learning white man's ways by becoming white man's burden became the way of life forced upon native Americans.

NAT TURNER'S UPRISING

You mought be rich as cream
And you drive you coach and four-horse team,
But you can't keep the world from moverin' round
Nor Nat Turner from gainin' ground.

And your name it mought be Caesar sure,
And you got cannon can shoot a mile or more,
But you can't keep the world from moverin' round
Nor Nat Turner from gainin' ground.
— popular abolition song

There were slave rebellions since the beginning of that "peculiar institution." Slaves organized insurrections on the ships that brought them to America; many were executed or cruelly punished for rebelling. Slave uprisings took place which were more organized and led by more articulate and revolutionary men than Nat Turner. In 1800 Gabriel Prosser, after months of planning, led a group of fellow slaves to attack Richmond and seize the arsenal. He and his followers were captured and executed. In 1822 Denmark Vesey, who bought his own freedom, organized a slave rebellion in Charleston, but before his elaborate plot could be launched, he was betrayed by a privileged slave and executed along with scores of his followers.

Nat Turner's rebellion was the best known of all slave uprisings because it resulted in the killing of whites, which outraged and terrified the South. A plowman and preacher, Nat Turner believed he was chosen by God to deliver his people from slavery. He convinced a small group of slaves of his divine mission, and on August 21, 1831 he and his band killed his master and family and attacked other white homes in the Southampton County of Virginia. Within twenty-four hours about sixty whites were slaughtered. His followers soon numbered 60 or 70, and troops were called out to suppress the revolt. Over 100 slaves were killed by the militia whether or not they were involved in the insurrection. Nat Turner and his remaining followers were captured and hanged.

The South, stunned by the extent of Nat Turner's attack, responded with new and even more repressive Black Codes, to discourage any new threats to the institution of slavery. Throughout southern counties, patrols and vigilante committees apprehended or assaulted blacks they happened to encounter, searched dwellings for weapons, and administered punishments to blacks upon suspicion of conspiracy or causing disorder.

The Nat Turner uprising launched debates on slavery throughout the nation, and in the South, it dispelled any feelings of security among slaveholders.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Follow the drinking gourd,
Follow the drinking gourd,
For the old man is a-waiting
For to carry you to freedom,
Follow the drinking gourd.
— song of the Underground Railroad

Runaway slaves would look up in the sky for the Big Dipper, or the "drinking gourd" which pointed North, and on cloudy nights they would feel tree trunks for moss to find the northward direction to freedom. Black men, women and children would risk the severest punishments to escape bondage, running on foot, wading through swamps and streams to erase their scent and escape the pursuing bloodhounds.

Thousands of white familes, in the South as well as North, at great risk to themselves let their homes be used as "stations" for the Underground Railroad. Slaves would journey from one "station" to another, ten to twenty miles apart, traveling at night to avoid detection. Guided by a conductor, they would be hidden in barns, cellars, sheds, churches, in secret compartments of wagons and carts. The routes of the railroad ran from Southern plantations up rivers and valleys and across mountains to points on the Ohio or Mississippi River, to points in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, to the Great Lakes and beyond. Fugitives and their guides were often pursued up North by slave-owners and sheriffs. Whites caught helping blacks to escape were considered "slave-stealers," and they were imprisoned, fined and sometimes killed.

There were several thousand active workers in the Underground Railroad, and its vast interstate workers were well-organized and kept secret. Some men and women did their part by raising funds needed for conveying black people to freedom. Railroad organizer Levi Coffin whose home in Newport, Indiana was a strategic station, helped over 3,000 slaves to escape. The courageous conductor, John Fairfield, son of a slave-holding family, used ingenious methods to help slaves make their way to safety, posing as a slave trader, a preacher or peddler. He risked his life many times and suffered as the fugitives suffered, from exposure and exhaustion. The most famous black conductor was Harriet Tubman who once said, "I nebber run my train off de track and I nebber lost a passenger." To raise needed funds for the Railroad, she would hire herself out as a domestic servant. After the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, she took her charges all the way to Canada.

The activities of the Underground Railroad were extremely dangerous and against federal law, but thousands of Americans, men and women, black and white, from North and South, evangelists and atheists, believed in a higher law, and dedicated themselves to its work.

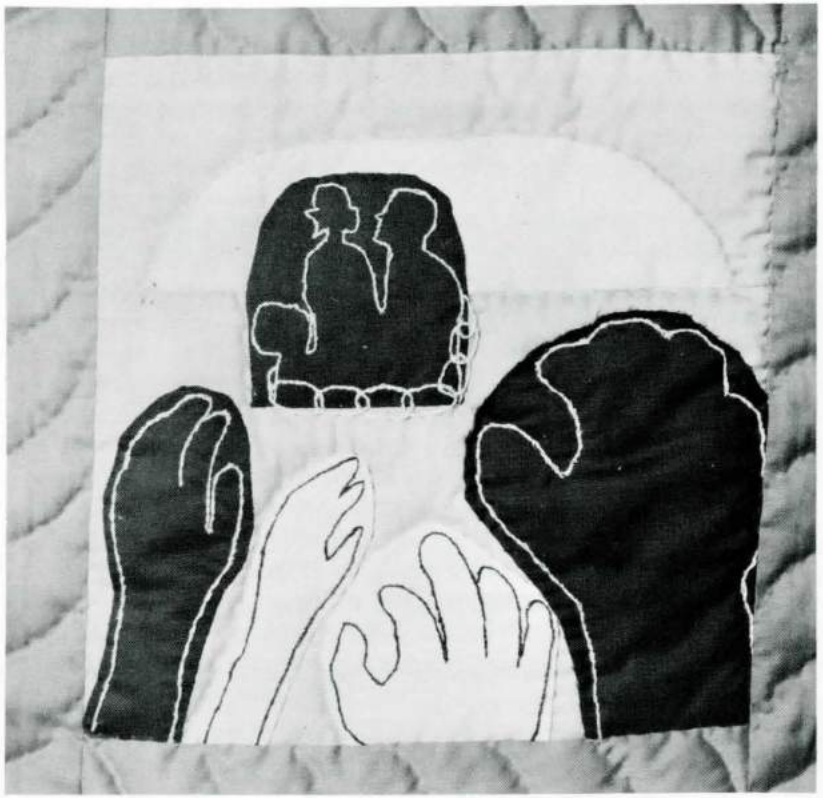
THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT

I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs,
Hell and despair are upon me, crack and again crack the marksmen,
I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore drips...
Agonies are one of my changes of garments.
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels,
I myself become the wounded person.
— from "Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman

The activists in the abolition movement were a courageous and determined group of men and women. The movement between 1830-1860 was organized by religious leaders and social reformers who believed slavery was unchristian and inhumane. Quakers had opposed slavery since its beginning in America. The black writer David Walker published his eloquent, fiery anti-slavery *Appeal* in 1829, stirring up debate and fanning the flames of abolition. In his essay, he called for militant action from his own people, declaring: "America is more our country than it is the whites' — we have enriched it with our *blood and tears.* The greatest riches in all America have arisen from our blood and tears; and they will drive us from our property and homes, which we have earned with our blood."

In the South abolitionists were regarded as dangerous outside agitators; in the North they were considered radicals. They suffered persecution and hardship and disappointment, but they continued in their dedication. By 1840 about a quarter of a million people had joined the American Anti-slavery Society with 2000 chapters throughout the country.

Abolitionists submitted petition after petition to Congress, but the "gag rule" of 1836 prevented the discussion of slavery petitions. John Quincy Adams as Congressman argued against this rule and persistently introduced anti-slavery petitions to the House.



Abolition meetings were broken up by rioters in Boston and New York, and in the South anyone suspected of being an abolitionist was in danger of being tarred and feathered, beaten or killed. Publishers of anti-slavery papers were often assaulted and their presses destroyed. Elijah P. Lovejoy had his presses destroyed three times, and in 1837 when the fourth one arrived, he died fighting to protect it from the hands of a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Illinois.

When Prudence Crandall opened a school for black girls in Canterbury, Connecticut in 1832, the villagers tried to burn it down. She was arrested for the crime of teaching blacks to read and write and was convicted. Twenty years later Margaret Douglas was found guilty of the same "crime" in Norfolk, Virginia and spent a month in prison.

Lloyd Garrison was the most well-known abolitionist of his time and published *The Liberator*, most widely-read of the anti-slavery papers. When William C. Coffin, abolition leader invited young Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave to tell his story to an anti-slavery convention in 1841, Garrison was so moved he asked "Have we been listening to a thing, a piece of property or a man?" The crowd responded, "A man, a man!" Douglass went on to become one of the most famous black spokespersons in history and founded an abolitionist paper directed at the blacks themselves called *The North Star.*

Like Sojourner Truth, the courageous eloquent black woman reformer, Douglass agitated for women's rights as well as abolition of slavery. Some abolition leaders couldn't reconcile their sexist views with the movement. In 1840 Lucretia Mott and several other women delegates were refused seats at the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London. (Garrison and others boycotted the meeting.) When Mott, Lydia Maria Child and Maria Weston Chapman were elected to the executive committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, Lewis Tappan, an influential abolitionist said, "To put a woman on the committee with men is contrary to the usages of civilized society."

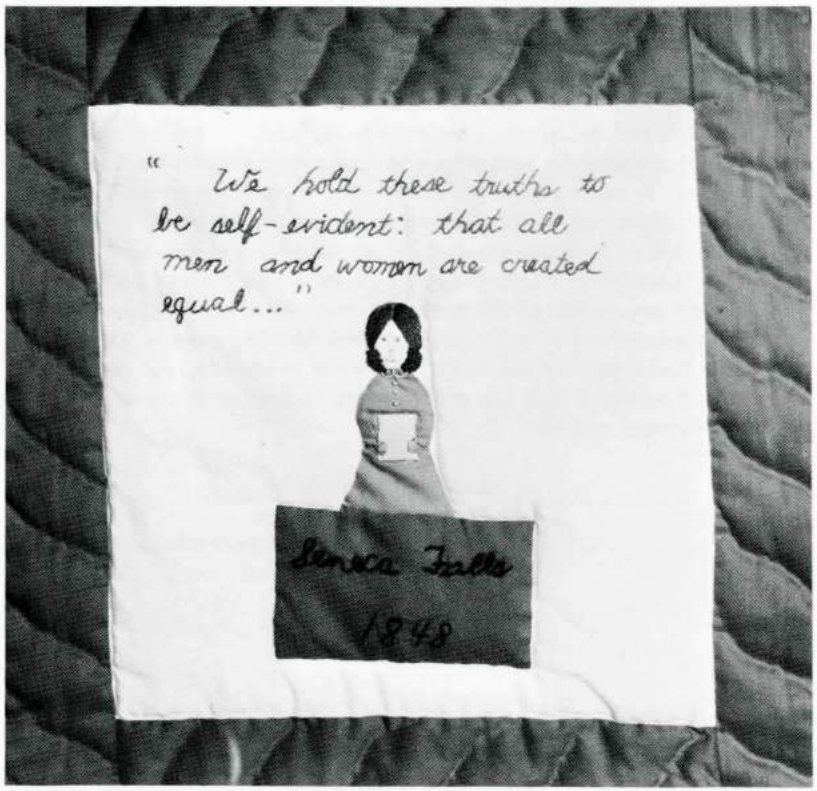
In 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared, wakening more sympathy for the plight of the slave than any abolitionist propaganda. The issue of slavery was then popularized.

The work of abolitionists, black and white, influenced the thoughts of President Lincoln, drew battle lines for the Civil War, and finally led to the end of the most terrible American institution, slavery. After the war, their persistent agitation resulted in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments which guaranteed the rights of black people.

SENECA FALLS

He has endeavored in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her powers, to lesson her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

— from the Declaration, Seneca Falls, 1848



Two women active in abolition and reformist activities, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, called a meeting to launch a campaign for women's rights. Several hundred women and some sympathetic men journeyed to Seneca Falls in upstate New York — and this was before the days of the transcontinental railroad, automobiles and the telephone.

At the convention, July 19-20, 1848, a Declaration of Independence for Women was drafted, which is as revolutionary as the document on which it was modeled. It stated: "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different than they have hitherto occupied. . . . We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men and women are created equal." The declaration carried a list of grievances caused by the tyranny of men, demanded the rights of citizenship, to vote, to own property in their names, to be able to get good education, to enter any profession, to be treated as equals with men.

The meeting at Seneca Falls was so successful that it became a model for subsequent meetings and conventions on women's rights. The proclamation of 1848 is relevant today, and many American women have the same grievances so eloquently expressed by their mid-19th century sisters.

Sex prejudice has been the chief hindrance in the rapid advance of the women's rights movement to its present status, and it is still a stupendous obstacle to be overcome. This world taught women nothing skillful and then said her work was valueless. It permitted her no opinions and said she did not know how to think. It forbade her to speak in public, and said the sex had no orators. It denied her the schools, and said the sex had no genius. It robbed her of every vestige of responsibility, and then called her weak. It taught her that every pleasure must come as a favor from men, and when to gain it she decked herself in paint and fine feathers, as she had been taught to do, it called her vain.

— Carrie Chapman Catt, 1902

HARPER'S FERRY

It was a sense of the wrongs which we have suffered that prompted the noble but unfortunate Captain John Brown and his associates to attempt to give freedom to a small number, at least, of those who are now held by cruel and unjust laws, and by no less cruel and unjust men. To this freedom they were entitled by every known principle of justice and humanity. Dear brother, could I die for a more noble cause?

— John Copeland, black student from Oberlin, who joined in Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, writing to his brother while awaiting hanging, 1859

Letter to John Brown's wife, Mary Ann Brown

Farmer Centre, Ohio
November 14, 1859

My Dear Madam: In an hour like this the common words of sympathy may seem like idle words, and yet I want to say something to you, the noble wife of the hero of the 19th century. Belonging to the race your dear husband reached forth his hand to assist I need not tell you that my sympathies are with you. I thank you for the brave words you have spoken. A republic that produces such a wife and mother may hope for better days. Our heart may grow more hopeful for humanity when it sees the sublime sacrifice it is about to receive from his hands. Not in vain has your dear husband periled all, if the martyrdom of one hero is worth more than the life of a million cowards. From the prison comes forth a shout of triumph over that power whose ethics are robbery of the feeble and oppression of the weak, the trophies of whose chivalry are a plundered cradle and a scourged and bleeding woman. Dear sister I thank you for the brave and noble words that you have spoken. Enclosed I send you a few dollars as a token of my gratitude, reverence and love.

Yours respectfully,
Frances Ellen Watkins
(Ms. Watkins was a black schoolteacher and abolitionist)

At eight o'clock on Sunday evening, October 16, 1859, John Brown rose to his feet and said, "Men, get your arms. We will proceed to the Ferry."

Brown and his eighteen followers proceeded to the bridge--the federal arsenal was his goal, hoping the slaves would rally round him to disappear into the mountains. Harper's Ferry was the gateway to the swamps where he expected the liberated slaves to take refuge.

His plan failed and Brown was captured. He was sentenced to be hanged and on the morning of December 2, 1859 mounted the gallows, where he handed a guard one sentence written by him, "Charleston, Virginia, 2 December 1859. I, John Brown, am now quite *certain* that the crimes of this *guilty land* will never be purged *away* but with Blood I had *as I now think vainly* flattered myself that without *very much* blood shed it might be done."

After this incident the family broke up with some of the boys taking their families and moving to Ohio. The wife, Mary Brown, with one son and two daughters, moved west to northern California. The son went to a ranch in Humboldt County where he lived the rest of his life. Mary and the daughters moved to Rohnerville in Humboldt County where their old home still stands. Annie, the younger daughter, is buried in the old cemetery in that town.

Mary and daughter Sarah died in Saratoga, Santa Clara County, and are buried in the Saratoga cemetery.

Beatrice Keesey, great-granddaughter, 1975

DRAFT RIOTS — 1863

I've tried to get a wife, I tried to get a sub,
But what I next shall do now, really is the rub;
My money's almost gone and I am nearly daft!
Will someone tell me what to do to get out of the draft?

— from "Disconsolate Conscript," protest song of the Civil War

On July 7, 1863 President Lincoln made a speech in which he declared that the Civil war was to quell "a gigantic Rebellion, at the bottom of which is an effort to overthrow the principle that all men are created equal." But the North had within its boundaries a great many people suffering from inequality and oppression and ready to rebel.

The Draft Act of March 1863 gave the president of the nation a power that he had never had before, that of determining the life and death of the men of any city, county or state. Many looked upon the bill as a violation of state constitutions. The Union army needed to keep its ranks filled, and all men between the ages of 20 and 45 were draftable. The clause that created the most hostility provided that any man could escape the draft by finding a substitute or paying an exemption fee of $300. The bill clearly favored the rich, and many poor Americans were furious.

In Holmes County, Ohio, some farmers took up arms and defied the draft law. In a battle with the Ohio infantry, two farmers were killed and several wounded. Pennsylvania, which sent more contingents than any other state, had draft riots in the coal counties that were suppressed by federal troops. When draft officers appeared in these areas, the hard-pressed miners, whose lives were already regulated by mine bosses, exploded in anger. The war had emphasized the harshness of their lives and the total helplessness they felt in determining their own destinies.

In some northern cities the protest against the draft erupted into racial violence with the blacks as scapegoats. There were such riots in Boston, Albany and Chicago. In Detroit a black neighborhood was burned, and in Cleveland a hundred black people were killed by white mobs.

The worst draft riots were in New York, mid-July of 1863. They began when someone threw a rock through a window of a draft office at 3rd Avenue and 46th Street. An angry crowd overran the office, setting it on fire. Before long the entire block was burned to the ground. Angry whites, a large majority of whom were impoverished Irish workers, had little sympathy with the objectives of the war. They were frustrated by rising prices and increased unemployment. They saw rich men buy their way out of the draft while they were sent to fight a war that was going to liberate all Negroes. They feared being overrun by blacks who would take their jobs away. Any blacks who crossed the paths of the furious mobs were beaten or killed. Some blacks were hanged from lampposts. Police and anyone who tried to prevent the lynchings were beaten or killed. The authorities were badly outnumbered, so the riots raged for several days. Homes of blacks were burned, businesses employing blacks were looted and vandalized, the mayor's house was attacked. The Colored Orphan Asylum was set on fire.

The Draft Act was suspended until the army arrived to restore order, and city authorities, in an effort to pacify the defiant mobs, announced that funds would be set aside for those too poor to pay the $300 commutation fee. The discriminating clause of the draft law was ended the following year. The extensive property damage and the loss of human lives caused by violent and racist reaction to the first National Conscription Act cruelly demonstrated that the North had its own house to tend to.

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

This document issued by Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War was a military measure proclaiming the freeing of slaves in states that were in rebellion against the Union. It welcomed blacks into the Union Army. Lincoln, favoring gradual emancipation and colonization of blacks, ironically did not use his power to free slaves in areas under Union control. Many slaves in border states were not freed until the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery everywhere in the United States, was passed on January 31, 1865.

Yet the Emancipation Proclamation changed the character of the war, making the Union army a liberation army to black people. The edict caused confusion in the South and deprived the Confederacy of needed manpower. To abolitionists, the Proclamation, although not all that they had worked for, presented new hope for government action toward the winning of freedom in America. On New Year's Eve, 1862, the day before the Proclamation would take effect, blacks and white abolitionists throughout the country gathered in churches and meeting places to sing and celebrate the arrival of the "Year of Jubilee."

CHINESE LABOR ON THE RAILROAD

In the veins of our people, flows the commingled blood of the four greatest nationalities of modern days. The impetuous daring and dash of the French, the philosophical and sturdy spirit of the German, the unflinching solidity of the English, and the light-hearted impetuosity of the Irish, have all contributed each its appropriate share. . . . A people deducing its origins from such races, and condensing their best traits into its national life, is capable of any achievement.

— Judge Nathaniel Bennett, keynote speaker at the Golden Spike Convention in San Francisco, 1869

The building of the transcontinental railroad was an enormous accomplishment which united two portions of the United States by rail and was heralded as the "work of the age." Its successful completion was largely due to the skill and endurance of 12,000 Chinese Pacific workers who suffered incredible hardships during the building of the railroad.

The Union Pacific, coming from the East, also had a largely immigrant work force, the thousands of exploited Irish, as well as Mormon crews of Utah. Union Pacific workers laid 1,086 miles of track, and the Central Pacific 690, but the latter company, having to cross the treacherous high Sierras, had a far more perilous and difficult course, and an unknown number of Chinese were killed during the several years' construction.

At Promontory, Utah, May 10, 1869, officials, politicians and townspeople gathered for the triumphant golden spike ceremony marking the "meeting of the rails." Neither praise nor recognition were given to the nameless thousands of Chinese workers who made up four-fifths of the work force of the Central Pacific which built the western portion of the railroad. They were excluded from the historic golden spike photographs, and their achievements are often forgotten in history. At the Centennial Ceremony of the transcontinental railroad in 1969 the keynote speaker, Secretary of Transportation John Volpe, asked rhetorically, "Who else but Americans could drill ten tunnels in mountains 30 feet deep in snow? Who else but Americans could chisel through miles of solid granite? Who else but Americans could have laid ten miles of track in 12 hours?"

Who else indeed but Chinese laborers who were denied civil rights, who were unequally taxed and excluded from public education and a variety of occupations, who were forbidden to become naturalized American citizens?

Chinese labor developed a good part of the western United States, and Chinese workers advanced agriculture, mining and many industries. Yet the history of Chinese immigration to America is one of struggle against discrimination, legalized and otherwise. Chinese is the only race excluded from immigration by name. The Burlingame Treaty of 1868 was forced upon China to ensure free flow of cheap labor. When labor unions saw Chinese as an economic threat and the fear of "yellow peril" spread, the government passed the Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 which forbade the immigration of Chinese laborers and reaffirmed that no Chinese could be naturalized.

Racism institutionalized by law wrought untold suffering on Chinese pioneer and immigrant alike. Massacres of Chinese and burnings of Chinatowns were common in the latter part of the 19th century and by the 20th, the nation had established a tradition of discrimination against Asians. Angel Island in San Francisco Bay was the immigration station where between 1910 and 1940 thousands of Chinese immigrants or returnees from China were detained for months and even years. Deportations of Chinese were common, and harassment was a method to discourage immigration. The Chinese Exclusion Law was not repealed until 1943, and even then the remnants of a long history of discrimination remained.

Even in the building of the railroad they struggled against blatant discrimination. In 1867 they went on strike over unfair treatment, declaring "eight hours a day good enough for white man, good enough for Chinese too." The strike was dealt with harshly, and in the Sierras with no food and no support, the Chinese were forced to return to the same work load.

Chinese did not submit to oppression without fighting back. They took their grievances to the streets and to the courts. Some of their civil rights victories set precedents which strengthened the Constitution for all people.

THE INCIDENT AT HAYMARKET SQUARE, CHICAGO

We mean to make things over
We're tired of toil for nought
But bare enough to live on; never
An hour for thought.
We want to feel the sunshine; we
Want to smell the flowers
We're sure that God has willed it
And we mean to have eight hours.
We're summoning our forces from
Shipyard, shop and mill
Eight hours for work, eight hours for rest
Eight hours for what we will!

— popular labor song of 1886

The forces of labor were gathering momentum, and the newly founded American Federation of Labor had passed a resolution calling all labor to join on May 1, 1886 to establish an eight-hour day. Industrialists looked with horror upon the growing labor movement and hoped to break its strength. Newspapers across the nation attacked labor and *The New York Times* declared the struggled for an eight-hour day "un-American" and that "labor disturbances are brought about by foreigners."

Tensions mounted in Chicago preceding the May 1st strike. Employers of the industrial center readied themselves with special police and Pinkertons, and the National Guard was mobilized, ready for violence.

But May 1st in Chicago was a proud celebration for workers. Eighty thousand people stopped work, and a huge parade of labor marched down Michigan Avenue. It was a peaceful demonstration and rally, and workers were jubilant, hopeful of success in winning the eight-hour day.

On May 3, a crowd of locked-out employees clashed with the police, and several workers were shot by the officers as they retreated. A rally was called for the following evening in Haymarket Square to protest police brutality and continue agitation for the eight-hour day.

One hundred eighty police were called to keep watch on the rally. It was a peaceful demonstration, however, attended by the mayor of Chicago who was in the crowd watching for any disturbances. Albert Parsons, trade union organizer, and August Spies, editor of a German workers' paper, were keynote speakers. When the rally was nearly over, the police marched on the demonstration, ordering the crowd to disperse. "But captain, we are peaceable," said a rally organizer. Then suddenly a bomb was thrown in the night. Police fired in the dark and struck at demonstrators with their clubs. Seven policemen were killed by the explosion, sixty-seven wounded. Four workers died and fifty more were injured.

The bomb-thrower was never found, and labor organizers were convinced that industrialists, determined to destroy the labor movement, were responsible. Newspapers spread lurid reports of labor's conspiracy to overthrow the country, making allegations that the speakers at the rally arranged the bomb-throwing. Police raided labor headquarters, arresting suspects and beating them, foreign-language newspaper presses were smashed. Eight suspects, among them Albert Parsons and August Spies, were convicted of murdering the policemen at Haymarket.

Albert Parsons, whose wife and two young children accompanied him at the Haymarket rally, insisted that he never advocated violence, that he and his fellow workers were convicted of the crime of being labor organizers, that they were victims of a monopolist conspiracy. August Spies addressed the judge defiantly, "And if you think you can crush out those ideas that are gaining ground more and more every day, if you think you can crush them out by sending us to the gallows...if you would once more have people suffer the penalty of death because they have dared to tell the truth...then I will proudly and defiantly pay

the costly price! Call your hangman!"

Parsons, Spies, Adolf Fischer and George Engel (the last three called by the press "European conspirators" because they were immigrants) were hanged. Four others had life sentences. In 1893 the three surviving prisoners were pardoned by Governor Algeld of Illinois on grounds that they were not granted a fair trial. The widow of Parsons, Lucy Eldine Gonzales Parsons of Mexican-Indian heritage, who fought desperately to save her husband's life, continued to work in the labor movement and became a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Newspapers and magazines spread public panic over socialists and anarchists, beginning the stereotype of the violent, bomb-throwing half-crazed alien, seeking to overthrow the country. American labor suffered a serious setback after the Haymarket affair, but the A.F. of L. continued to organize for the eight-hour day. May 1, 1890 was another landmark in the labor movement, and on that day workers all over the world joined in support of the shorter work day. The International May Day grew out of the struggle for the eight-hour day in America.

WOUNDED KNEE — 1973

They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one. They promised to take our land, and they took it.

— Red Cloud, Oglala Sioux Chief

As we put this quilt together, we realized that many of the milestones of U.S. history being celebrated this Bicentennial were gravestones to the Native American Indians: the establishment of states that drove them out, the power of laws that ruled against their rights, federal bureaucracy that "pacified tribes", achievements such as the building of railroads and highways that invaded Indian lands and destroyed their homes and hunting grounds, the whole celebrated westward movement of pioneers and settlers that brought armies of "bluecoats" that destroyed them. White man's progress meant the end of the Indian way of life.

Native Americans have strong feelings about the Bicentennial. As Ken Powlas said, "In the 200 years of your American Heritage, the Indian has suffered, and still does, from the capitalist, colonial tyranny imposed on him since the founding fathers ironically released themselves from their own oppressive colonial tyrants." To the Indians 200 years of the American republic is the history of suffering and tragedy, and to this day for the first American, there remains economic deprivation and limited civil rights.

It was during America's celebration of its first hundred years that the 7th Calvary, led by Custer met a crushing defeat by the forces of Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull at the Battle of Little Big Horn. The first report of the incident appeared some days later in the eastern papers on July 5, 1876 when the nation was in a self-congratulatory mood. The government, humiliated and vengeful, was determined to rid itself of the "Indian problem" once and for all, and launched a campaign of slaughter and land theft that led up to the holocaust at Wounded Knee, South Dakota.

Many Plains Indians, in desperation and despair over the loss of land and constant harassment by federal troops, adopted a new religion called the Ghost Dance, which taught that the spirits of departed Indians would return to help the living and Indians would again thrive in their own nations. This religion spread quickly, and, fearing an uprising, the federal government wanted the Ghost Dance stopped. The Indian Bureau in Washington suspected that the great Chief Sitting Bull was behind the agitation; they ordered his arrest, and he was subsequently assassinated.

Joined by some of Sitting Bull's people, Big Foot, the Hunkpapa Sioux chief, started to take his people to Pine Ridge, South Dakota to seek the protection of Chief Red Cloud. On the cold snowy trek the band of Indians was arrested by a unit of the 7th Calvary with orders to take Big Foot and his people to an army camp on a creek known as Wounded Knee. At the camp the 120 men and 230 women and children were kept prisoner, encircled by troops with four Hotchkiss guns overlooking the camp, positioned on the Sioux teepees. The soldiers made the Indians turn in all their guns, knives, axes, and searched all their belongings. Then they ordered the Indians to remove their blankets to be searched further.

Indians and soldiers broke into a fight, and the shooting began. The huge machine guns on the hills opened fire on the camp, the barrage of bullets cutting down men, women and children. The soldiers pursued anyone who tried to escape the circle of fire, and some of the women were chased for miles before they were killed. On that wintry day, the fourth day after Christmas, 1890, three hundred Indians were massacred. Much later, Black Elk recalled:

> I did not know then how much was ended. When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream...the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer and the sacred tree is dead.

Vine Deloria analyzed the implications of Wounded Knee in *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties:*

> Wounded Knee marked the first sustained modern protest by aboriginal peoples against the Western European interpretation of history, for the Oglala Sioux refused to accept the definitions which the American legal system had to use to cover up the status of Indian tribes and make them appear to be merely a minor domestic problem of the United States. In their declaration of independence, the Oglala Sioux spoke to the world about freedom for all aboriginal peoples from the tyranny of Western European thought, values and interpretations of man's experiences.

The American Indian is far from extinct. History and textbooks treat the story of Indians as a tragic chapter of the past at best, while movies and television perpetuate the image of the bloodthirsty, wild red man. Sympathetic treatments portray Indians as noble savages in a pageant of long ago. Yet the condition of contemporary Indians is ignored, and Indians have continued to suffer from government deceit, cultural deprivation and land theft.

When American Indians took over Alcatraz in November of 1969 the nation was forced to come to grips with the reality of living Indians and their grievances. Alcatraz became the symbol of the Indian movement to restore tribal lands and inspired other Indian actions. In 1972 a thousand Native Americans from many tribes joined a caravan known as the Trail of Broken Treaties to present the Twenty Points to the government, the most fundamental of the demands being the restoration of treaty relations. Some of the Indians occupied the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, the incompetent colonizing agency of the government.

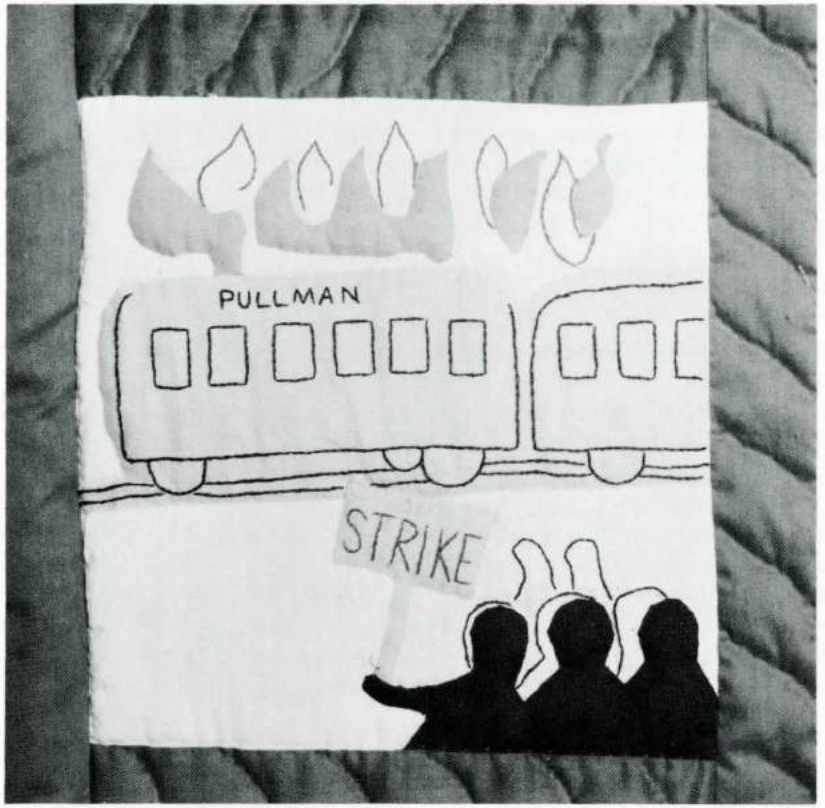
Eighty-three years after the bloody massacre of the Sioux at Wounded Knee, a new state of siege took place. Wounded Knee 1973 was a 73-day

occupation by Indians protesting the recent murder of several Indians, police brutality, loss of land, loss of tribal government and federal bungling of Indian affairs. The conditions of Pine Ridge reservation were typical of many reservations: an average yearly income of $1500 per family and a 70 percent unemployment rate. AIM, the American Indian Movment, led by Russell Means and Dennis Banks made Wounded Knee the scene of international attention. The historic village on Pine Ridge became a symbol of new self-determination for all Indians. The federal blockade of Wounded Knee and the ensuing battle resulting in two Indian deaths and the wounding of a U.S. marshal caused national embarrassment, especially when the U.S. was fighting a war against other small nations in Southeast Asia. It seemed obvious that all the "enemies" of the U.S. lived in villages.

Promises from the government made during recent Indian protests have not been kept, and Indians continue to struggle for survival. Many Indians have been indicted for Wounded Knee and other incidents. America will see more actions from Indians determined to win back rights originally recognized in solemn treaties with the United States.

THE PULLMAN STRIKE

Remember we are workingmen, and we want honest pay.
And gentlemen, remember, we work hard day by day;
Let Pullman remember too, no matter where he roams,
We built up his capital, and we're pleading for our homes.
— from a strike song, 1894



It was work and poverty in Pullmantown, or Pullmandown until patience ceasing to be a virtue and further forbearance becoming a treason to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the employees determined to strike to better their conditions.

— Eugene Debs, addressing first annual convention of the American Railway Union, 1894

Pullman, Illinois was a "model community" where the five thousand employees of George Pullman, inventor of the sleeping car, were forced to live.

Pullman devised a system of getting back the meager wages he paid his workers by setting up the company town. The housing at Pullman was twenty-five percent higher than outside the town, and the utilities were several times higher. Workers had to shop at the company store. All at a huge profit to Pullman and his investors. If there was ever a clear case of corporate feudalism, it was at Pullman.

In the lean year of 1894, wages were cut so that Pullman could keep up dividend payments to stockholders. When members of a worker committee who addressed their grievances to management were laid off, the workers voted to strike. Support came from from the newly organized American Railway Union, whose president Eugene Debs had won respect from workers for his successful leadership of the strike against the Great Northern Railroad. Members of the A.R.U. voted not to handle Pullman cars in support of the strikers. Within a few weeks, transportation was paralyzed in half the country. The employers' organization, the General Managers' Association, desperate to crush the strike, demanded federal intervention.

Attorney-General Richard Olney, former lawyer for the railroads, was only too glad to act. He issued a blanket injunction against all strike activities. Although Debs felt that the strike could be won peacefully, violence broke out when the railroads hired thugs to be "deputy marshals" who beat up strikers, shot at demonstrators and set fire to freight cars. When Debs and other union leaders refused to yield to the injunction, President Cleveland sent several thousand federal troops to Chicago, despite the protest of Illinois Governor John P. Altgeld, who declared the move unconstitutional. Thousands of armed deputies, police and troops clashed with strikers and sympathizers. Thirty men and women were killed and many wounded.

A federal grand jury indicted Debs and other American Railway Union officials for conspiracy against the government. They were released on bail only to be arrested again a week later, charged with contempt of court and violation of the injunction. Clarence Darrow defended the strikers, but his case was defeated. The strike was broken and the American Railway Union destroyed. Debs, a democrat, was converted to socialism during his six-month prison sentence.

The great Pullman strike was one of the most controversial labor issues in American history. Though it failed, the nation was exposed to the injustices of the paternalism of Pullman, the consequences of federal intervention in a labor dispute, and the complicity of the Attorney-General in destroying the American Railway Union. Public sympathy was with Debs, who argued that the government sided with capital rather than with the working people, that the real lawbreakers were the railroads and the Attorney General. Years afterwards, the debate continued. In reply to an article on the strike by ex-President Cleveland, Debs wrote: "President Cleveland says that we were put down because we had acted in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust laws of 1890. Will he kindly state what other trusts were proceeded against and what capitalists were sentenced to prison during his administration?"

THE POPULISTS

I was once a tool of oppression
And as green as a sucker could be;
And monopolies banded together
To beat a poor bum like me.

The railroads and the party bosses
Together did sweetly agree;
And they thought that there would be little trouble
In working a hayseed like me.

But now I've roused up a little
And their greed and corruption I see;
And the ticket we vote next November
Will be made up of hayseeds like me.
—*A Hayseed Like Me*, Populist song

Business was tightly established, labor had its organizations and uprisings. By the latter part of the 19th century farmers were ignored in Congress, voiceless and unrepresented. The producers of America suffered from falling prices for their labors and foreclosures on their farms. Farmers no longer felt they could depend on the government for help, and though isolated and rugged individualists, they struggled to organize for survival. The first nationwide farmers' organization was the Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry, formed after the Civil War, and by 1873 there were granges in almost every state with most of the strength and numbers in the Midwest. The granges broke the isolation of the farmer, stimulating interest in politics, culture and education.

In 1890 Congress passed the McKinley Tariff, the highest protective tariff to date, raising duties on manufactured goods and causing severe hardship on the farmer. The Farmer's Alliance, born out of this governmental injustice, grew and spread, publishing newspapers, educating farmers and starting co-operatives, urging self-reliance. Between 1890 and 1892 the Farmers Alliance developed into the Populist Party.

The Populists were mainly farmers, but remnants of the Knights of Labor, suffragists, socialists and reformers joined this most colorful political party. They were fiery, energetic and almost religious in promoting their ideas. Their leaders were natural orators and reached out to the common people; it was above all a grass-roots movement. Mary Ellen Lease expressed what the people had been feeling all along: "Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people, for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street, and for Wall Street. Our laws are the output of a system that clothes rascals in robes and honesty in rags." The Populists aimed to restore government to the hands of the "plain people" and abolish the rule of privilege and monopoly.

In the 1890 elections the Populists managed to send twenty senators and representatives from the farmlands to the capitol. Their politics were winning the people, and in 1892 the newest party was after the presidency.

The Populists held their first national convention July 4, in Omaha, Nebraska, and drafted a dynamic and progressive platform, declaring their purposes to be at one with the Constitution. Their platform stated in part:

> We have witnessed for more than a quarter of a century the struggles of the two great political parties for power and plunder, while grievous wrongs have been inflicted upon the suffering people. We charge that the controlling influences dominating both these parties have permitted the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to prevent or restrain them. Neither do they now promise us any substantial reform. They have agreed together to ignore in the coming campaign every issue but one. They propose to drown the outcries of a plundered people with the uproar of a sham battle over the tariffs, so that capitalists, corporations, national banks, rings, trusts, watered stock, the demonetization of silver and the oppressions of the usurers may all be lost sight of. They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives and children on the altar of mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the millionaires.

Pledging to work for equal rights and equal privileges "for all the men and women of this country," the Populists laid out their program beginning with solidarity with the labor movement, government ownership of the railroads, and a new national currency, "a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution to the people," free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold and a graduated income tax. The Populists demanded nationalization of telegraph and telephone services, land reform, the abolition of the Pinkerton system ("A menace to our liberties"), election reforms, and opposed any government aid to any private corporation. Progressive as they were in most areas, the Populists were a "down home" American party, believing as many conservatives in restrictive immigration. They regarded new immigrants as a threat to labor unions.

The Populists' candidate James B. Weaver won a million votes, but President Cleveland was re-elected. The panic that swept the country soon after closed factories and banks, and caused severe inflation. Farm prices collapsed. Farmers argued for coinage of free silver as a way of relieving the crisis, while conservatives believed that only the gold standard was stable. (To which the fiery prairie orator William Jennings Bryant replied at the '96 convention:". . . you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.")

Populists flocked to the Democratic party to support Bryant, a Democrat from Nebraska who spoke the Populist language. The eastern Democrats and the former president opposed Bryant, giving strength to the Republicans. The campaign, starring Bryant, was spectacular. Bryant travelled throughout America, making up to ten speeches a day, appealing to laborers, farmers, progressives and liberals. It was a close race, and McKinley won by a half million votes. After the defeat of Bryant, the Populists as a political force faded from the scene, but their ideas were influential for many decades after.

CHILD LABOR

Children rise at half-past four, commanded by the ogre scream of the factory whistle; they hurry, ill fed, unkempt, unwashed, half-dressed, to the walls which shut out the day, to dust and merciless maze of the machine. Here, penned in little narrow lanes, they look and leap and reach and tie among acres and acres of looms. Always the snow of the lint in their faces, always the thunder of machines in their ears. A scant half-hour at noon breaks the twelve-hour vigil, for it is nightfall when the long hours end and the children may return to the barracks they call "home," often too tired to wait for the cheerless meal which the mother, also working in the factory, must cook after her factory day is over. Frequently at noon and at night they fall asleep with the food unswallowed in the mouth. Frequently they snatch only a bite and curl up undressed on the bed, to gather strength for the same dull round tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.

— Edwin Markham, *Children in Bondage*, 1914

Children had always been used as cheap, docile labor in America, but with industrialization the horrors of child labor were emphasized. The 1900 census showed that there were two million children under 16 employed in the factories, fields and mines, and in the new age of reform the public began to be aware of the evils of child labor through writings and publicized investigations.

Industrialists resisted reforms, threatening to move their factories and businesses out of states that supported child labor laws. In many families the employment of children meant survival, and children of impoverished families desperately clung to their jobs, lying about their age, running and hiding when inspectors made their rounds. Proposed legislation affected only factory labor. In 1916 Congress passed a law forbidding the shipment in interstate commerce of the products of child labor, but this was considered unconstitutional. Congress later passed a law taxing products of child labor, but this too was ruled out by the Supreme Court.

Children as young as six worked night shifts in canneries. Youngsters made a few cents an hour on tobacco plantations and in factories manufacturing cigars and cigarettes. Seven year olds picked cotton in sweltering fields. Breaker boys worked ten to twelve hours a day in mines picking out slate from coal. Children of migratory workers labored in fruit and vegetable fields as long as their parents. Many children worked at home, taking care of younger ones while their parents worked.

Children who worked in the factories, fields and mines suffered from ill-health and accidents, and if they survived, grew up bent and sickly, illiterate and without hope. Children of seven were old enough to work at the glass factories, working in the heat of the ovens, inhaling the powdered glass, often suffering horrible burns from fragments of molten glass. In the gulf states little children worked in the shrimp and oyster industries, little hands eaten by the acid of the shellfish. Mills ran two shifts, a day shift and a night shift, for maximum profit. Factories and sweatshops were poorly lit and children suffered several times more accidents than adults. The conditions of work for children were unsanitary and unsafe by any standards. States varied in their child labor laws, some had age limits of 12 or 14, but these laws were difficult to enforce.

Child laborers came from all races and many immigrant groups. The practice of employing children continued until the New Deal of the 1930s, which finally outlawed child labor. For many years afterwards, however, in fields and factories, some employers continued to use children, in violation of the law.

This square was sewn by Lolly Font whose mother worked in the textile mills at the age of 12.

EQUAL EDUCATION

The most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit.
— Erik Erikson

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson felt that self-government was impossible without the education of all Americans, rich or poor. In the 1830s new ideas of education from Europe began progressive change in schools and the way in which children were taught. Non-sectarian, tax-supported public schools began to be formed in many states and spread throughout the United States in the latter part of the 19th century.

Yet children of color were excluded from public schools, enslaved blacks not allowed to read or write, and after they were freed, could only attend separate, unequal schools. Chinese and Japanese children were segregated into "oriental schools," and Mexican, Latino and Indian children were also denied equal education. Indian children on reservations were forced by missionaries to deny their own culture, language and customs. Children of poor families remained illiterate because they had to work from morning until night. Poverty-stricken children who did attend school often could not learn because they were hungry. Girls were often denied education, and women were excluded from colleges and many professional schools.

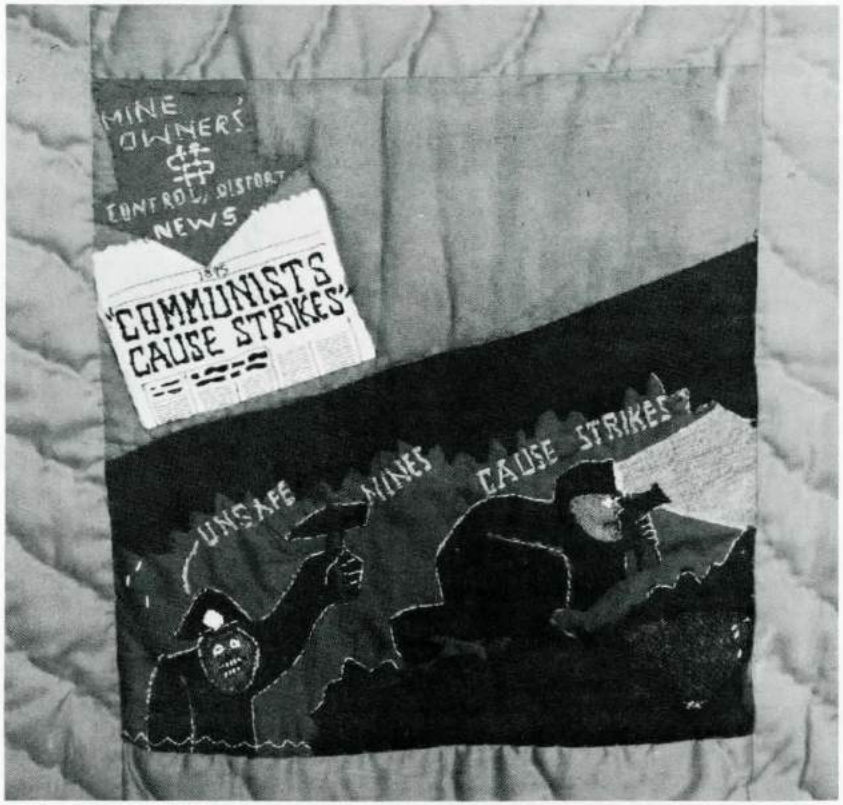
Wealthy families could afford nursery schools, prep schools, the best colleges and universities. "It's not what you know but who you know" were the words the unchanging establishment that ruled the country lived by. I.Q. tests were designed for upper and middle class whites, and they were used to designate many minority children as stupid and retarded, excluding them from further education.

Even when schools were integrated, ideas remained segregationist. The values taught in school were all WASP values, the heros and heroines and historical events portraying the superiority of the white man and his culture. Still, children are taught that Columbus "discovered" America, that pioneers "won the West" and to remember the Alamo. Textbooks, teachers and administrators have perpetuated myths and stereotypes about minorites and women. Omission of the struggles and achievements of minorites and women have given us all a dangerously narrow view of our past, not to mention the damage done to the consciousness of all children.

In many states textbooks are being revised to include minorities; curriculum and teacher training are establishing a multicultural concept in education. Ethnic studies are not being taught in high schools and multicultural programs are used in the early grades. The process of changing centuries-old concepts is slow and difficult, and often tokenism and patronizing attitudes prevail.

Yet important changes are coming about. In the Lau vs. Nichols case of January 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that the San Francisco system discriminated against non-English speaking Chinese students by failing to help them overcome their language barrier, thus denying them a "meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program." Because of this decision millions of non-English speaking children across the nation, Asians, Latinos, Mexican-Americans, can now learn in their native languages, participating in the first bilingual public education programs. The Lau vs. Nichols decision was the first time in U.S. history that the court recognized the needs of non-English speaking children.

RED BAITING IN UNION STRIKES



In the fall of 1919 there were three large strikes, in all of which red baiting occurred and the real issues of the strikers were ignored. When Boston policemen struck over long hours, poor pay and bad working conditions and agitated to join the American Federation of Labor, they were accused of being "Bolshevistic" and subversive. *The Wall Street Journal* declared, "Boston in chaos reveals its sinister substance. Lenin and Trotsky are on their way." Newspapers inflamed the edgy public further with scare headlines and warnings of imminent Red takeovers. All the striking policemen were fired and a new police force was recruited.

When 275,000 steel workers walked off the job, protesting low wages, deplorable conditions and long working hours, they faced the same accusations of being Bolshevistic. The government and the press emphasized the radicalism of the strikers and accused unions of "Bolshevizing" American industry. The strike became violent with many bloody confrontations between workers and police. In the face of a public hostile to labor and the powerful United States Steel Corporation, the strike failed.

Miners were angry that the coal industry had prospered during the war, but miners' wages stayed the same because of a wage agreement made in September, 1917 to run for the duration of the war. When coal operators didn't raise wages after the war, miners agitated for a new wage contract. In November 1919 the United Mine Workers Convention, under the leadership of John L. Lewis, resolved to terminate the wartime contract and call a nationwide strike unless their demands were met and a new agreement signed. Coal operators refused to consider these demands.

Lewis declared a strike announcing, "The United Mine Workers of America are now embarking upon the greatest enterprise ever undertaken in the history of the trades union movement." He stated that the purpose of the strike was for the "right to a fair wage and proper working conditions," that "no other issue is involved and there must be no attempt on the part of anyone to inject into the strike any extraneous purposes."

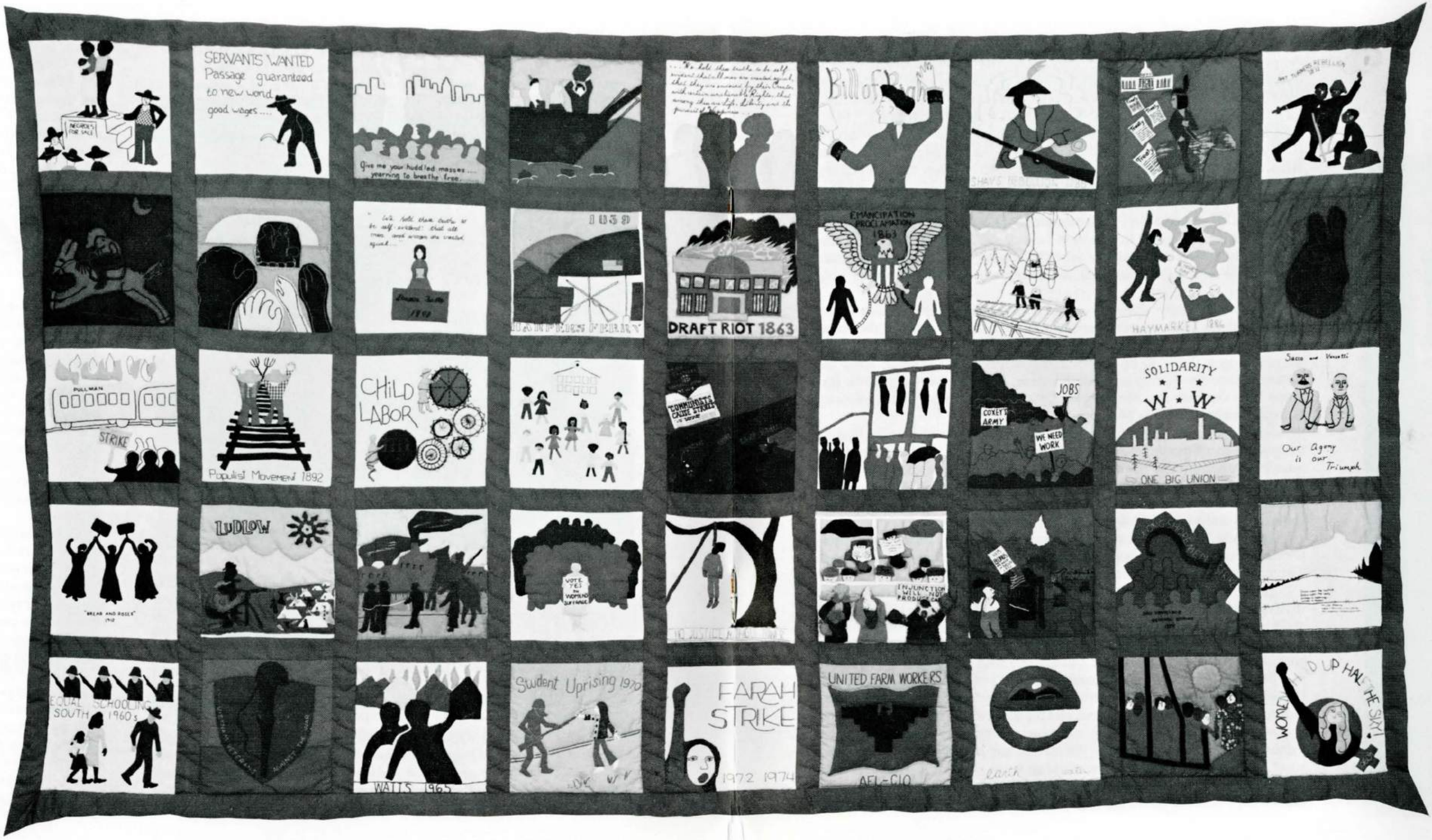
It was inevitable that during a year when other strikers were being condemned for their radical and "Red" actions, miners on strike would be treated the same way. Conservatives and anti-labor people and mine owners demanded that the government prevent an "insurrection" led by communists. A chief spokesman for coal operators released to the press a statement that the coal strike was being undertaken on direct orders from Trotsky and Lenin and financially backed by Moscow. Other inflammatory propoganda was spread and widely publicized as evidence against the coal miners.

Federal Judge Anderson issued a temporary injunction to prevent the walkout. Lewis accused President Wilson and his cabinet of "sinister financial interests" and charged that the injunction was a curtailment of the rights of citizens.

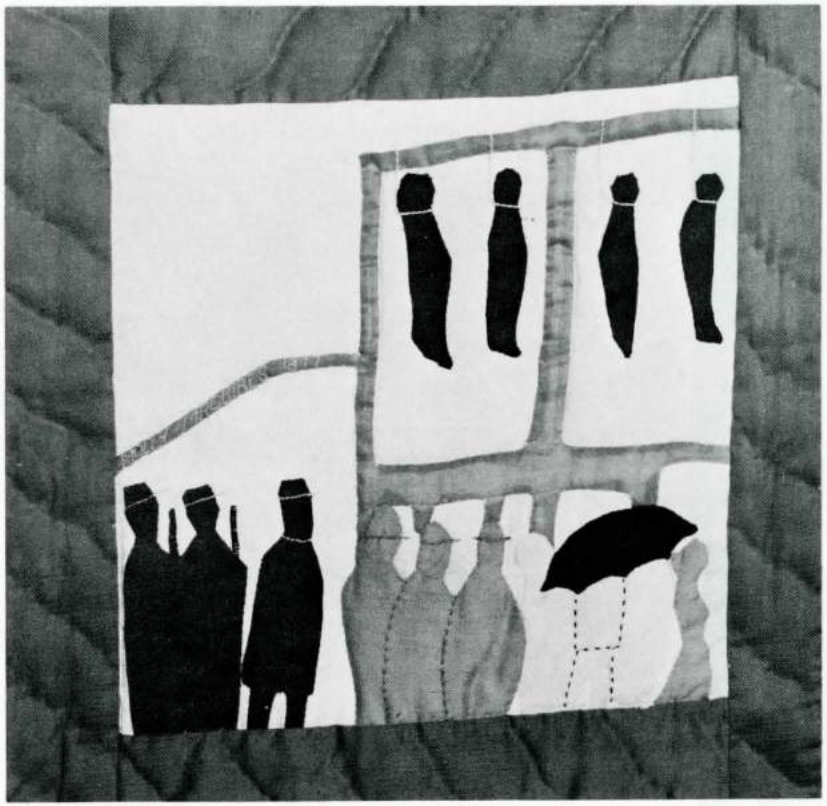
Three hundred and ninety-four thousand leaderless miners left the mines, and the fact that such a huge walkout occurred in spite of the federal injunction convinced the press and public all the more that "Reds" were behind it all. The U.M.W. leaders were ordered to cancel the strike, and even after they did, the workers were reluctant to return to work. During that time the Fuel Administration had to conserve heat, factories were shut down, workdays cut, rail transportation limited. Attorney General Palmer, who saw Reds everywhere, was convinced that a Bolshevist revolution was around the corner.

In a final effort to end the strike Judge Anderson cited Lewis and 83 other U.M.W. officials for violation of the injunction. Meanwhile President Wilson authorized the Fuel Administration to offer the striking miners a flat 14 percent wage increase and promised that a commission would investigate their other grievances. In the face of these events, the solidarity of the remaining strikers was broken, and the President's plan was accepted. The workers got a 27 percent increase but no change in hours or working conditions.

Since that time the tactic of red baiting has reappeared time and time again in workers' strikes, in political protests and in struggles for civil rights.


NEGROES FOR SALE
SERVANTS WANTED
Passage guaranteed
to new world
good wages....
Give me your huddled masses.....
yearning to breathe free.
Bill of Rights
1832
DRAFT RIOT 1863
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION 1863
HAYMARKET 1886
PULLMAN
STRIKE
Populist Movement 1892
CHILD LABOR
COMMODITY CAUSE STRIKE
JOBS
COXEY'S ARMY
WE NEED WORK
SOLIDARITY
I
W W W
ONE BIG UNION
Sacco and Vanzetti
Our Agony
is our
Triumph
"BREAD AND ROSES"
1912
LUDLOW
VOTE YES
for
WOMENS
SUFFRAGE
EQUAL SCHOOLING
SOUTH 1960s
WATTS 1965
Student Uprising 1970
FARAH
STRIKE
1972 1974
UNITED FARM WORKERS
AFL-CIO
earth
WOMEN
HALF THE SKY!

THE MOLLY MCGUIRES



Men, if you must die with your boots on, die for your families, your homes, your country, but do not longer consent to die like rats in a trap for those who have no more interest in you than the pick you dig with.

— John Siney, head of the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, after a mine explosion took the lives of 179 men, 1869

Between 1840 and 1870 over 20,000 Irishmen came to Schuylkill County in Pennsylvania's anthracite country. They left poverty in Ireland to find incredible hardship and often disaster in the coalfields of America. They became workhorses owned by mine operators, laboring six days a week from dawn until dusk for eleven or twelve dollars a week. Men suffered from "miner's knees," black lung diseases, injuries, overwork and hunger. Mine owners refused to install emergency exits that could save miners' lives in an explosion, they did not install ventilating and pumping systems, and spared expenses by not installing sound scaffolding. Irish workers were considered expendable. Even children were used for separating slate from coal as it poured down the chutes, and boys as young as seven would work until exhaustion for one to three dollars a week.

The miners organized for the eight hour day in 1868, forming the Workingmen's Benevolent Association of Schuylkill County in the process. The strike failed but the organization remained, and miners continued to agitate for a big union.

Franklin Benjamin Gowan, head of a huge monopoly, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, was also president of the railroad's subsidy, the Philadelphia Coal and Iron Company. Ruthless and ambitious, he saw the organizing miners as a threat to his profits and control. In 1873 Gowan hired the Pinkerton Detective Agency to break the union, charging that the patriotic fraternal Irish organization, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, had a militant, terrorist caucus, the Molly McGuires.

James McParlan, a twenty-nine year old native of Ireland, was the Pinkerton spy sent to infiltrate the Order of Hibernians to entrap militant miners in a conspiracy against mine workers. There never has been any evidence of the actual existence of the Molly McGuires. Many historians believe that the group was a fabrication Gowan used to brand miners who organized as violent, dangerous men and to provide an excuse to crush union activity.

Impatient for the Pinkerton spy to turn up evidence against the miners, Gowan decided to force a showdown. He announced a twenty percent pay cut. The miners went on strike January 1, 1875.

The mine operators, led by Gowan, launched a campaign of terror against striking miners. Several miners were killed by mine operators' vigilantes, and many were beaten and wounded. Several union leaders and the wife of a miner were murdered. Led by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the miners fought back. Union leaders were arrested and charged with conspiracy.

The leaders imprisoned and many killed, the rank and file of the Ancient Order of Hibernians continued to resist. The press carried inflammatory stories inspired by Gowan of miners' violence and the terrorism of the Molly McGuires who were supposedly attempting to overthrow society by inspiring strikes. The strike took its toll on the families of the miners, and children began to die from hunger. Women, men and children would go to the woods to dig for roots and herbs to subsist. After six months of suffering, the miners were defeated by starvation. The union was beaten and organizers blacklisted. Miners were forced to

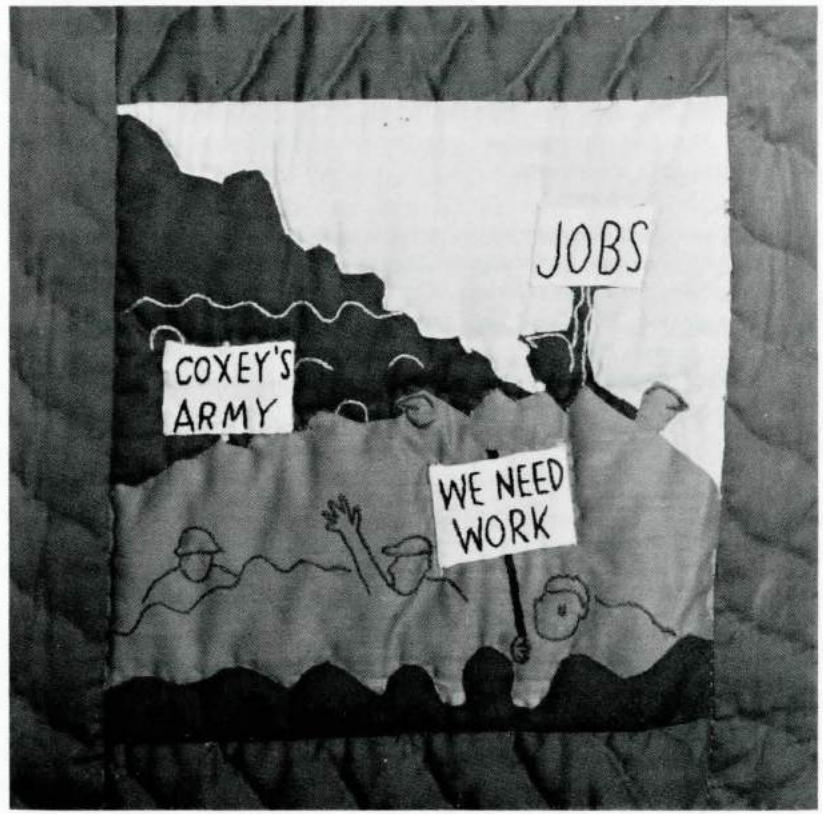
accept the twenty percent pay cut.

But the miners continued to fight back. Gowan was determined to wipe out union activity once and for all. Militant miners were brought to trial, and the Pinkerton spy McParlan testified that the miners were Molly McGuires who murdered a patrolman. In a trial that was a mockery of justice, five miners, all of whom had been active in the 1875 strike, were found guilty. Other miners were convicted for other murders only on the testimony of McParlan. Between June 1877 and January 1879, nineteen miners were hanged. They were executed not for the accused crime, or even of being Molly McGuires, but for being union organizers fighting the cruel system of the coalfields and the men who ran it.

COXEY'S ARMY

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
That the grass plot so dear to the hearts of us all?
Is it green yet and fair, in the well-nurtured plight,
Unpolluted by Coxeyites' hated foot-fall?
Midst the yell of police, and the swish of clubs through the air,
We could hardly tell if our grass was still there.
But the green growing grass doth in triumph yet wave,
And the gallant police with their buttons of brass
Will sure make the Coxeyites keep off the grass.

— satiric song, 1894



Millions of Americans were unemployed in the Panic of 1893 as businesses collapsed, banks failed and industries went bankrupt. While farmers and workers and their families suffered, J.P. Morgan, Rockefeller and Carnegie expanded their holdings.

The government was besieged with demands for public relief. Thousands of unemployed roamed the country. There were demonstrations for federal assistance, but no action from the government. On Easter Sunday, 1894, Populist Jacob S. Coxey of Massilon, Ohio led five hundred unemployed people to Washington. The refrain of the Coxey's Army song was: "Hurrah! Hurrah! We want the jubilee!/ Hurrah! Hurrah! Hard working men are we./ We only want a chance to live in this land of the free,/ Marching in the Coxey Army."

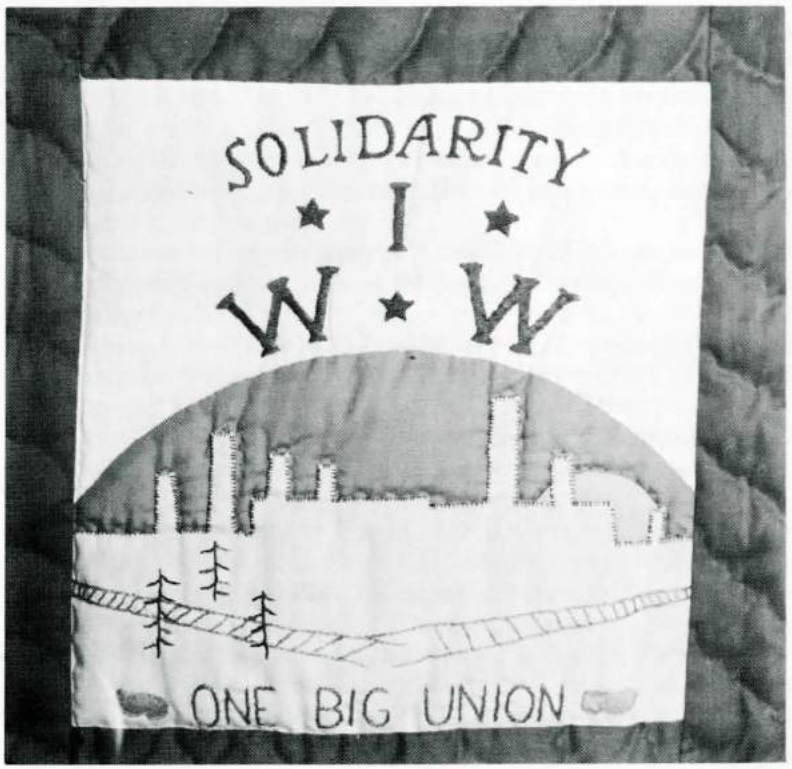
Coxey proposed that Congress authorize a public works program that would absorb America's unemployed, and marched on Washington to publicize his plan. This march, a living petition to President Cleveland, received widespread publicity. The ragged, impoverished band, arriving in Washington D.C. on May 1, symbolized the plight of millions, and made the well-to-do highly nervous. There were many other "armies of the unemployed," but Coxey's Army was the only one that made it to the Capitol. An army of police was waiting for them at the end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Coxey and other leaders were arrested for walking on the grass, and club-wielding police dispersed the demonstrators.

Coxey, who had prepared a speech to be read from the steps of the Capitol, issued this statement:

> Up these steps the lobbyists of trusts and corporations have passed unchallenged on their way to the Committee rooms, access to which we, the representatives of the toiling wealth producers, have been denied. We stand here today in behalf of millions of toilers whose prayers have been responded to, and whose opportunities for honest, remunerative labor have been taken away from them by unjust legislation, which protects idlers, speculators and gamblers.

WOBBLIES

Workers of the world, awaken!
Break your chains, demand your rights.
All the wealth you make is taken
By exploiting parasites.
Shall you kneel in deep submission
From your cradles to your graves?
Is the height of your ambition
To be good and willing slaves?
— from an IWW song by Joe Hill



Pete Seeger called the Wobblies "the singingest union." The Industrial Workers of the World (nicknamed "Wobblies") were founded in Chicago, 1905. They used music and humor to spread their cause, and their meetings and protests were enlivened by their own songs. Wobblies believed in "one big

union", the abolishing of the wage system and capitalism. But it was their energetic style, their humanity and courage that made them legendary. They were America's most daring, most idealistic and revolutionary union, and their history is as colorful as it is full of torment and struggle.

In the early years of the Twentieth Century the unskilled workers were the most exploited class of people; thirty-five thousand of them died annually from industrial accidents alone. These workers, ignored by the American Federation of Labor and other trade unions, were unorganized. By the second decade of the Twentieth Century two percent of the population owned 60 percent of the nation's wealth, while nearly a half lived in poverty. Not only did the working class not receive their fair share of earnings, they did not receive their full rights as citizens.

The Wobblies dedicated themselves to changing all this. They were concerned with human rights over property rights. "Big Bill" Haywood, Wobbly leader, spoke of the hypocrisy of mineowners who could "wreck whole populations," then become maudlin over the destruction of a mill.

Wobblies were called "bums" and worse, to which they replied with the spirited song, "Halleluya, I'm a bum." One Wobbly explained the plight of so many outcasts of American life:

> If you were a bum without a blanket; it you had left your wife and kids when you went west for a job, and had never located them since; if your job never kept you long enough in a place to qualify you to vote; if you slept in a lousy, sour bunk-house, and ate food just as rotten as they could give you and get by with it . . . if every person who represented law and order and the nation beat you up, railroaded you to jail, and the good Christian people cheered and told them to go to it, how the hell do you expect a man to be patriotic?

The Wobblies gave workers a new outlook. Local I.W.W. halls became the refuge of the outcast and jobless. The songs and stories gave the down-trodden wage-slave hope and a sense of solidarity and purpose. The I.W.W. appealed to migrant workers, miners, cowboys, lumberjacks and the unemployed.

"It makes no difference what your color, Creed or sex or kin, If you are a worker, then it's kick right in and join" goes one Wobbly recruiting song. While the A.F. of L. under Samuel Gompers attacked "Asiatic coolie-ism," the I.W.W. welcomed Chinese and Japanese to its ranks. While other unions supported the world war, the I.W.W. came out against it resolving, "We condemn all wars and for the prevention of such, we proclaim the anti-militarist propaganda in time of peace, thus promoting class solidarity among the workers of the entire world, and in time of war, the General Strike in all industries." One of the first women union leaders was Wobbly Elizabeth Gurley Flynn who inspired and organized women at the Lawrence strike. Wobblies all felt strength and initiative in their beliefs. Once when a group of them were arrested, they were asked, "Who's your leader?" And they replied, "We all are."

The Wobblies were at the peak of their strength in 1912 after the Lawrence Victory. Lawrence was a major center in a belt of textile mills owned by the powerful American Woolen Company, and in January mill workers began a spontaneous strike in response to a cut in already low wages. The Wobbly local in Lawrence called for help from fellow members, and they poured into the mill town, organizing soup kitchens and picket lines. "Big Bill" Haywood and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn urged the workers to unite, to use direct action but no violence. Lawrence was a town of immigrants, and at least twenty-five nationalities were involved in the strike. Together the different groups held out for nine weeks and won wage increases--a victory that inspired mill workers across the nation. During the Lawrence strike there was an attempt to discredit the strikers by framing the I.W.W. as saboteurs. Twenty-eight sticks of dynamite were planted in the town by a businessman who was on the school board. He was arrested and convicted, but was let off with a fine of $500. Two Wobblies and a Lawrence strike leader, on the other hand, were arrested for causing the death of a woman picketeer who was killed by the militia, and held for five months without trial before they were acquitted.

Though the Wobblies spoke in the language of Thomas Paine and Jefferson, the business class heard it as a language of violence and anarchy. They became scapegoats, labeled rabble-rousers and troublemakers. Repression followed them everywhere. Because of their opposition to the war, the War Department authorized the army to pursue them and bring them in on charges of sedition and treason. The Wobblies became embroiled in numerous defense trials, their energies and resources drained, and their leaders imprisoned.

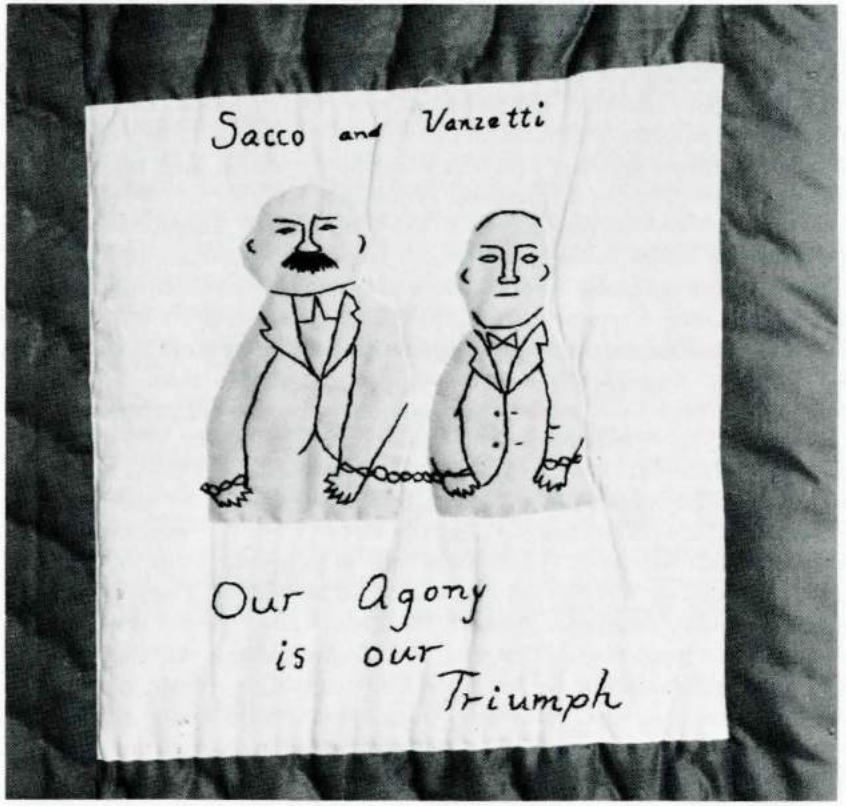
The I.W.W. had many martyrs who were killed for their Wobbly beliefs and actions. Most famous is Joe Hill, convicted of murder in Utah and hanged, whose songs have become part of our vocabulary. ("Pie in the sky when you die" is from Joe Hill's "The Preacher and the Slave".) His last words were in a telegram to Bill Haywood: "Don't waste time in mourning. Organize." Frank Little, half-Indian Wobbly was lynched while organizing a strike of metal miners in Butte, Montana. Another Wobbly, Wesley Everest was brutally murdered by a lynch mob in Centralia, Washington, after a skirmish with the American Legion during an Armistice Day celebration. When a group of Wobblies arrived in boats at Everett, Washington in 1916 during a campaign for free speech, they were fired upon by vigilantes and policemen on the shore. Five workers and scores of others were wounded.

While other unions became more conservative and compromising, the Wobblies refused to be co-opted. They continued in their idealism and resisted under federal and local persecution. The government began a post-war purge of radicals which led to new immigration and anti-alien laws. The Wobblies, though defeated, remained rebels to the end. They left a legacy that is part of American culture that is as truthful and inspiring as it was at the Lawrence Strike.

SACCO AND VANZETTI

By systematic exploitation of the defendants' alien blood, their imperfect knowledge of English, their unpopular socal views and their opposition to the war, the district attorney invoked against them a riot of political passion and patriotic sentiment; and the trial judge connived at — one had almost written cooperated in — the process.

— Felix Frankfurter, *The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti*



Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were young Italian immigrants accused of murdering a paymaster and his guard in a robbery of a shoe company in South Braintree, Massachusetts. Their case, because of its political nature, became an international issue during the 1920's.

Vanzetti was a laborer who worked at various jobs until he settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts. He led a factory strike and was blacklisted, whereupon he became a fish peddler. He became a close friend of Sacco, a skilled worker in a shoe factory, who shared his idealism and political beliefs. Both men were active in organizing strikes, raising funds for the defense of labor leaders, leafletting and holding protest meetings. They were Italian anarchists opposed to capitalism and war at a time when the United States was swept by the Red Scare, which suspected all foreigners of subversion.

Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested on May 5, 1920 for the crimes of robbery and murder and found guilty. Although there was no concrete evidence against the men, the judge and jury were determined that they be convicted for their political beliefs.

Sacco and Vanzetti waited for six years in prison as the execution date was continually being postponed because of the fervor of public protest. Appeals were denied, and they were finally executed by electric chair August 22, 1927. Sacco wrote in his last letter to his son:

> But remember always Dante, in the play of happiness don't use all for yourself only...help the weak ones that cry for help, help the persecuted and the victim because they are your better friends; they are the comrades that fight and fall as your father and Bartolomeo fought and fell...for the conquest of the joy of freedom for all...

And Vanzetti had these words for himself and Sacco and America:

> If it had not been for this thing I might have lived out my life among scorning men. I might have died unmarked, unknown, a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man, as now we do by accident. Our words — our lives — our pains — nothing! The taking of our lives — the lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler — all! This last moment belongs to us — this last agony is our triumph.

Across the nation these were hundreds of demonstrations protesting the execution of these two men. Rallies were held around the world decrying this American act of injustice and inhumanity, and protests flooded the State Department. In New York 50,000 people gathered in Union Square, and in small Italian towns vigils were held for Sacco and Vanzetti.

These two men were the scapegoats representing all people of the time who were aliens either in nationality or political belief. The country was to see a return of national hysteria in the McCarthy era of the 1950's and the trial and execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg.

BREAD AND ROSES, 1912

Better to starve fighting them than to starve working!

— Lawrence strikers

More than half of the the 30,000 strikers who successfully challenged the textile industry in Lawrence, Massachusetts were women and children. No union instigated this strike. It was a spontaneous reaction to conditions of corporate-induced poverty.

A year earlier 146 women and girls died in the Triangle Shirtwaist fire in New York City. The workers were mostly young and from immigrant families, earning pitifully low wages. The doors of the factory were locked to keep out union organizers, and the women either suffocated in the smoke and flames or leaped to their deaths from the windows onto the street.

At Lawrence the workers at mills owned by the American Woolen Company were poorly paid, and on the first payday of the year, January 11, 1912, the employers cut wages to insure the same huge profits to offset losses resulting from newly passed federal laws reducing the work hours of children under 18 and women from 56 to 64. Upon receiving their pay envelopes the workers shouted, "Short pay! Short pay!" They poured out of the factories into the streets in protest. Soon labor organizers and strike sympathizers came to Lawrence to help. When 15,000 workers who were demonstrating outside a mill were hosed with icy water in freezing temperatures, the strikers were further united and determined.

Women were involved in both the picketing and resultant violence. Two pregnant women lost their babies as a result of beatings, nursing mothers were jailed, one was shot and killed. The winter was bitterly cold and food for the strikers was short despite the valiant efforts of eleven IWW soup kitchens and the Franco-Belgian cooperative bakery. The children, half-starved, had to be evacuated to the homes of strike supporters in New York. The first group of 150 children was escorted by Margaret Sanger and her assistants, and was greeted by a crowd of 5000 people at Grand Central Station. A week later, forty children headed for Philadelphia were separated from their parents at the Lawrence railway station by 200 policemen. Mothers were beaten and arrested on charges of "neglect and improper guardianship."

The brutality of authorities in trying to suppress a strike of hungry, exploited workers shocked the country, and resulted in a Congressional investigation of the strike. The ensuing public reaction played a part in the textile corporation's eventual capitulation. On March 1, the American Woolen Company announced 7½ percent increases in 33 cities.

Historians of the labor movement feel that this strike was significant for its unfailing idealism. The workers were demanding a right to dignity, not just survival. The young mill girl's banner read:"We want bread and roses too."

Sharron Carleton

LUDLOW 1914

I chose the Ludlow Massacre for my square long before Richard Nixon resigned and Gerald Ford became President and chose Mr. Nelson Rockefeller as his vice-president. But at the time I began to speculate about the possibilities of power in the hands of an unelected president and the new aura given the office of the Vice-Presidency. It wasn't hard to guess that Mr. Ford would choose the former Governor of New York. I am from the east coast, and for as long as I can remember Rockefeller has been running for the Presidency of the United States. What does this have to do with Ludlow? Well, Ludlow is a little piece of the Rockefeller past, a lost history that never even crossed the minds of those Senate investigators. Too bad, because while we were carefully apprised of how much money this Rockefeller had (and wasn't it an awful lot of money?), we were never told how he got it. Of course everyone knew he inherited it from his grandfather, the Great John D., who made his money by cornering every source of oil in the country and because of his ruthless methods was forced to throw dimes in the streets to buy a little affection back from those he had robbed.

But that was the grandfather, and over the years the dimes have turned to philanthropic institutions softening the blows and dulling the memory.

Now back to 1914 and Ludlow, Colorado, a small mining community in which the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company operated. This company was owned by one John D. Rockefeller, Jr., grandfather of our Vice President. The miners in this town formed a union, the United Mine Workers of America, and although conscious of the anti-unionism and power of the Rockefeller clan, they were forced by economic necessity to call a strike. Since the town was owned by the company, the miners were quickly evicted from their homes and forced to live in tents on the outskirts of town. The strike dragged on, and the company, determined to keep the mines in operation, called out the National Guard. Vigilantes and National Guardsmen frequently took pot shots at the women and children in the campground when the men were on the picket lines. To protect their children the miners dug a cave inside the largest tent, where one pregnant woman and thirteen children were instructed to hide in case of danger.On the evening of April 20, 1914, the miners' tents were covered with oil and lit. When they ran to escape the fire, the National Guardsmen opened fire with machine guns. The woman and thirteen children died of suffocation in the fire. Another woman and five miners were gunned to death. Many were wounded. Later, John D. Rockefeller commented that it was a principled battle to protect working people from unionism. When indignant reporters pressed Rockefeller on the issue, he responded that he was above all a Christian. . . . I suppose that's a rich man's way of celebrating Easter.

I grew up in New Jersey and have been studying Rockefeller history for some time. I'm not surprised that they have as much money as they have. Rockefeller history is in practically every state in this country and in the world. Wherever you find oil and mineral resources, you will find a Rockefeller. Did the Rockefeller Commission deal fairly and honestly in its investigation of the CIA? Perhaps it was another "principled battle," the kind of honesty of Ludlow, the kind of fairness that caused a guilty conscience to throw dimes in the streets of the ghetto.

Marge Murphy

THE PALMER RAIDS

In the 1920s, no organized groups protested against the alien's loss of civil rights. Deportation cases were striking the friendless and the poor, the isolated and the ignorant. Radicals who might have objected were left alone. The figures showing that only 15 percent of the aliens arrested could raise bail or obtain counsel are indicative of their sorry condition and of their inability to resist. Of those ordered deported, only 2 percent sought release on habeas corpus, and five sixths of these failed.

— William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters*

In post World War America, anti-German feeling expanded into anti-foreign sentiment, and distress over the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 in Russia wrought repression upon aliens and dissenters, and many who were neither.

Attorney-General A. Mitchell Palmer, undertaking a crusade to save America from the "Red Menace," succeeded in fanning the flames of national anti-Red hysteria. In November of 1919, as an exercise for bigger things to come, the Bureau of Investigation agents under the directive of Palmer raided the offices of the Union of Russian Workers and 300 people were arrested. J. Edgar Hoover, zealous head of the General Intelligence Division of the Bureau, or the alien radical division, urged that either excessively high or no bail at all be set for people captured in these "inquiry dragnets" and that they be held in isolation without the interference of defense lawyers. The Bureau had developed a system for dealing with radicals: arrest and deportation. The 1918 Immigration Act gave the Secretary of Labor the power to deport any alien thought to be an anarchist or revolutionary.

On January 2, 1920 the Palmer Raids swept through 70 American cities, resulting in the arrest of 10,000 people. The target of the raids were members of socialist and communist organizations, but agents rounded up people in bowling alleys, cafes, homes, and at public meetings. In Massachusetts 39 bakers who had gathered for the purpose of establishing a co-op bakery were hauled into jail. Some people were arrested on the streets because they "looked radical." Said Palmer of the victims of his raids, "Out of the sly and crafty eyes of many of them leap cupidity, cruelty, insanity, and crime; from their lopsided faces, sloping brows, and misshapened features may be recognized the unmistakable criminal type." After they had been given the third-degree, kept for days in crowded cells, the haggard prisoners were often photographed for the newspapers so the public could see what dangerous wild-eyed "Bolsheviks" looked like.

In Boston 400 people taken from the immigration station for transfer to Deer Island in the harbor were forced to march in chains from the immigration station to the dock. Held in deplorable, crowded conditions at Deer Island, a prisoner went insane, two others died of pneumonia, and one killed himself by jumping out the window.

Eventually over half of the 10,000 arrested were released without charges after many of them had suffered terror, imprisonment and abuse at the hands of the authorities. The rest were held for long periods of time, and hundreds of men and women were deported. Many aliens did not know their rights and were easy victims; some were tortured or intimidated into confessing to being members of radical organizations.

Palmer and Hoover were not concerned with warrants or due process or any legalities of the raids. Neither were the press or a large majority of the public, who were caught up in the intense fear and hysteria. Congress for the

most part approved of Palmer's handling of the so-called "dangerous" elements in American society, and six months after the raids, an Immigration Act was passed which for the first time punished aliens for simply possessing literature showing sympathy for radical doctrines.

A dozen lawyers drew up a report, *Illegal Practices of the Department of Justice,* declaring that the Palmer Raids had trampled the Constitution and violated the First, Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Amendments. The report accused the government of lawlessness, of using agent provocateurs, third-degree tortures, illegal searches, seizures and arrests.

The terrible Palmer Raids succeeded in suppressing dissent, spreading fear, curtailing union activities, and enlivening a tradition in America of anti-foreign, anti-dissenter sentiment. The hunt for radicals, institutionalized by the Bureau, started the organization on its way to becoming the famous F.B.I. which has continued its activities of domestic surveillance and creating paranoia in America.

THE WOMEN'S VOTE

Yes, your honor, I have many things to say; for in your ordered verdict of guilty, you have trampled under foot every vital principle of our government. My natural rights, my civil rights, my political rights, my judicial rights, are all alike ignored. Robbed of the fundamental privilege of citizenship, I am degraded from the status of a citizen to that of a subject; and not only myself individually, but all of my sex, are, by your honor's verdict, doomed to political subjection under this, so-called, form of government.

— Susan B. Anthony, when charged with voting illegally in the presidential election of November, 1872
November, 1872

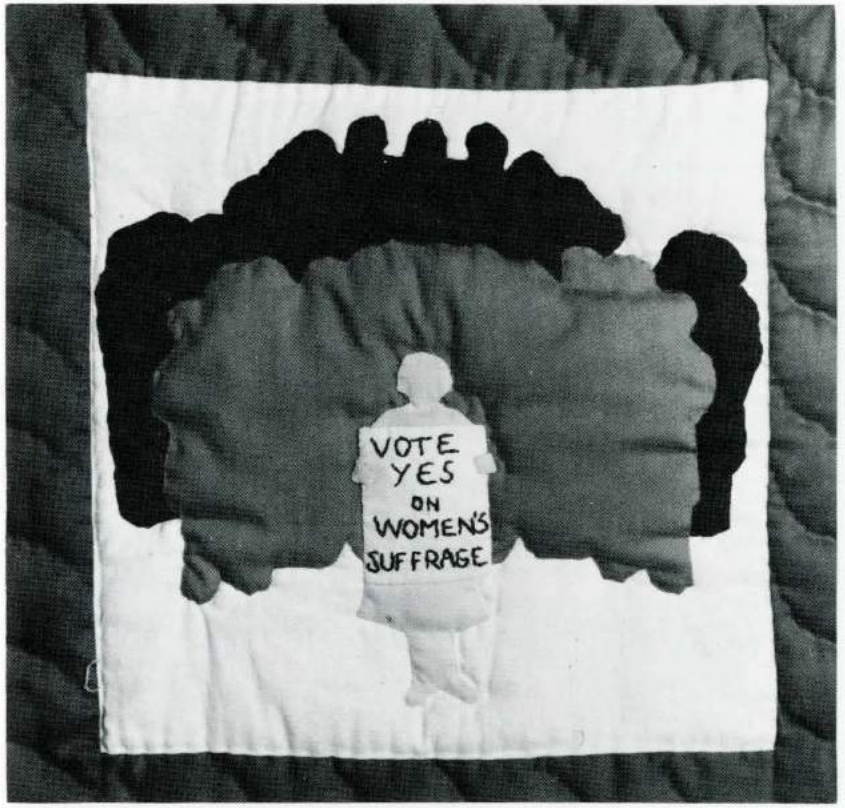
The judge in this case wished he had never asked if she had anything to say on her behalf. She persisted in arguing for her cause, concluding, "I shall never pay a dollar of your unjust penalty." The former abolitionist Ms. Anthony and many other eloquent, courageous and tireless suffragists argued, wrote, rallied, leafletted, marched, picketed and were imprisoned in the cause of the women's vote.

The territory of Wyoming granted the vote for women in 1869 and by 1898 three new states, Colorado, Utah and Idaho had followed suit. By 1914 eleven states had extended voting rights to women, but the suffrage movement had yet to have an impact on Congress. Once when Susan B. Anthony presented a petition with 20,000 signatures to Washington on the women's vote, she was rebuffed by the reply that the petition was worthless because it was signed by "only women."

There were two large suffragist groups, the Congressional Union, which later became the National Women's Party, a militant group led by Alice Paul, and the National American Women Suffrage Association headed by Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt who opposed radical tactics. The former group organized a parade of 5000 women down Pennsylvania Avenue in 1917 and the marchers had to be protected from outraged mobs by the National Guard. The movement in England and the militancy of the suffragists there gave impetus and examples to American women. Sylvia Pankhurst came to America, emphasizing the oppressed workingwomen's need for the vote and equal pay. Her mother Emmeline and sister Christobel also came to give encouragement, emphasizing the role of militancy in winning the vote.

When the National Council of Women met in Nashville, Tennessee in 1897, the *Nashville American* newspaper published this hackneyed putdown of the suffragists:

> Whether they will accomplish their ultimate purposes and establish woman on an absolute equality with man we have very serious doubts. We believe that natural laws will settle these questions . . . and we have an idea that no matter how far women may go in their projects of equality with men, that sooner or later they will retract their steps and finally will come to the place which the laws of nature and nature's God intended them.



Women out for votes suffered ridicule from editors, cartoonists, clergy, jeering crowds and other women. They were stoned and heckled, their banners and placards torn, their offices ransacked. Some women went on hunger strikes in jail and had to be force-fed. They marched down Fifth Avenue in New York, held vigils in Washington, and had meetings and more meetings. In the South, racist propoganda declared that the suffragists advocated intermarriage. An anti-suffragist piece read:"Women in suffrage states are serving on juries in murder cases, commercialized vice cases, and whiskey cases. Do you like the prospect for your wife and daughters? If not WAKE UP AND DEFEAT WOMAN SUFFRAGE."

Women activists retaliated with their own literature and often responded with humorous, satiric verse and writings. This was a reply to those who charged that the vote would "unsex" women:

> It doesn't unsex her to toil in a factory
> Minding the looms from dawn until night;
> To deal with a schoolful of children refractory
> Doesn't unsex her in anyone's sight;
> Work in a store where her back aches unhumanly —
> Doesn't unsex her at all you will note,
> But think how exceedingly rough and unwomanly
> Woman would be if she happened to vote.

Women argued that naturalized immigrant men were allowed the vote, freed male slaves were given the vote, and that by denying women the vote, they were classified with "idiots, lunatics and criminals." On February 10, 1919 sixty-five members of the National Women's Party burned President Wilson in effigy, protesting his lack of support for the federal suffrage amendment. The women were arrested and imprisoned. Some suffragists looked upon the vote as the end goal of their cause, but pioneers such as Alice Paul, Jane Addams, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Crystal Eastman and Susan B. Anthony (who did not live to see women vote), were dedicated to continuing progressive political change.

By the summer of 1920, thirty-five states had passed the Nineteenth Amendment in their legislatures, and the approval of only one more state was needed to make it a part of the Constitution. In August of that year, the state of Tennessee ratified the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, and it became the law of the land. Carrie Chapman Catt said, "That vote has been costly. Prize it!"

LYNCHING

Nor is the South alone responsible for this burning shame. . . . The sin against the Negro is both sectional and national; and until the voice of the North shall be heard in emphatic condemnation and withering reproach against these continued ruthless mob law murders, it will remain equally involved with the South in this common crime.

— Frederick Douglass, 1892

Whenever the Constitution comes between me and the virtue of the white women of South Carolina, I say to hell with the Constitution!

— Senator Cole Blease on lynching, 1930

The spector of lynching, violent death at the hands of a hysterical, bloodthirsty white mob has always haunted black people in America. The Ku Klux Klan, formed after the Civil War, terrorized blacks in the South with its threatening, flaming crosses in the night, its beatings and killings. White mobs without hoods and sheets dealt out punishment to blacks who got "uppity" or stepped out of line. Lynchings not only went unpunished, but were often condoned and even actively supported by politicians and law enforcement officers.

Between 1889-1921 there were 3467 recorded lynchings. By the turn of the century black people had launched an active campaign against mob terror. Black Congressman George H. White of North Carolina introduced in 1900 the first bill aimed at making lynching a federal offense. Ida B. Wells, a black woman, published the first statistical pamphlet on lynching, "The Red Record"; she was run out of Memphis and her Free Speech Newspaper offices were destroyed by whites for exposing the facts behind the lynching of three young blacks.

On July 28, 1917 10,000 black men, women and children marched down Fifth Avenue in New York in the Silent Protest Parade organized by the NAACP. Some bore banners reading, "Mr. President, Why Not Make America Safe for Democracy," and "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

In 1922 the NAACP rallied support for the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill with a *New York Times* ad which asked this shocking question: "Do you know that the United States is the Only Land on Earth Where Human Beings are Burned At the Stake?"

Six black soldiers returning from fighting in the World War in Europe were among the 28 blacks burned at the stake between 1918-21. During the "Red Summer" of 1919 twenty-five separate major race riots took place at various cities including Chicago, Omaha, E. St. Louis and Washington which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of black people.

A report of 1933 by the Southern Commission on the Study of Lynching found apologists for lynching from every walk of life — doctors, teachers, judges, preachers — who like the lynchers themselves felt that blacks were inferior and whites were justified in using any means to "keep the Negro in his place." Most lynchings in the thirties were of blacks accused of raping white women or insulting whites. Some victims were not accused of any crime at all.

Blacks have not been the only victims of lynchings. People considered "foreign" have been lynch victims as well as "outside agitators" and other people of color. In Los Angeles in 1871, 21 Chinese, including women and children were lynched, some of them hung from the city's lampposts. The possibility of this kind of mob violence remains as long as there are racial tensions in the United States. In October 1974, in south Boston, a black man passing through a crowd of whites protesting school busing was beaten and would have been lynched had he not been rescued by a gun-wielding patrolman.

THE FLINT STRIKE — 1937

When we walked out on you,
We set you back on your heels,
Goody goody!
So you lost some money and now
You know how it feels,
Goody, goody!
— parody of pop song sung by Flint workers

Strikers had everything to lose during the Great Depression. In 1930 auto workers who staged a strike were defeated and blacklisted. But the continuing bad working conditions and low pay made auto workers increasingly angry and determined to improve their situation. They were an exploited labor force, sometimes paid as low as 20 cents an hour, made to do monotonous work at a speeded-up pace without any relief. Spies within the plants reported on union activities, and anyone suspected of organizing was fired and sometimes beaten. During a heat wave in the summer of 1936 many men were worked to exhaustion, and there were many deaths on the assembly line at the General Motors plants.

On November 18, 1936 there was a sit-down strike in the G.M. plant in Atlanta, the next month at the plant in Kansas City, then in Cleveland, then Anderson, Indiana and Norwood, Ohio. The most critical strike that was to change the course of union history was at Flint, Michigan, the heart of the G.M. empire, January 4, 1937. Union sympathizers came by the thousands from all over the Midwest, fearing that the Flint strikers would be killed by G.M. vigilantes. Giant picket lines formed around the three occupied plants at Flint, thousands of women and children gathering to protect their husbands, fathers, and sons. Children marched in the cold with signs saying, "We're behind our Dads," and "Give Us a Chance for Better Food and a Better Life." Pickets and strikers stood firm, day and night in the bitter cold. Women brought food to the men in the plants and hoisted their little children to the windows to see their fathers and boost their spirits.

The nation watched for news of this huge strike at Flint, which soon became a symbol for working people everywhere, as each day the workers continued to hold out. The three plants were well organized into stalwart communities, the men sleeping in half-completed cars, writing, playing cards and growing stubby beards.

Sitting down in the plants was a new tactic and looked upon with horror by the industrialists who saw the occupation of private property as criminal and communistic. The "giants of industry" could not understand that these thousands of men occupying the plants had earned their share of G.M. by their blood and sweat. As to be expected, red-baiting was used as a tactic of the management to discredit the auto workers. Alfred P. Sloan, refusing to recognize the United Auto Workers Union, accused the strikers of trying to "Sovietize" the industry as a "dress rehearsal for Sovietizing the entire country." He advocated using troops to eject the strikers by force. John L. Lewis, head of the C.I.O. retaliated by charging that the country's largest corporation was breaking the law by violating the Wagner Labor Act.

An injunction was issued for the eviction of the strikers, and the Flint workers responded by calling out from the plants: "Damn the injunction, damn the courts, damn the army and double damn General Motors!" Though unarmed, they vowed they would fight to the last man to defend themselves if force was used against them.

G.M. tried unsuccessflly to freeze the men out, then they decided to starve them out. Police came with tear gas when the women arrived with food for the men. The women had to fight the tear gas and the police, and inside the men used water hoses on the police and tear gas bombs. As one woman said later, "Nothing was going to stop us getting food in to our men." The pickets threw stones, lumps of coal and bottles at the police and stood their ground. A woman addressed the mammoth picket line from the union sound wagon: "We don't want any violence; we don't want any trouble. We are going to do everything we can to keep from trouble, but we are going to protect our husbands."

As the state police and troops mobilized, women prepared themselves, inspiring solidarity by returning to the picket line after being gassed. Thousands joined the Women's Auxillary, and the Women's Emergency Brigade armed themselves with 2 by 4s.

The Governor of Michigan, Frank Murphy had the order for troops of the National Guard to clear the plants, but fearing a bloodbath for which he would be held responsible, could not issue it. On the morning of the 44th day of the strike, General Motors surrendered, announcing they would recognize the union and negotiate with the strikers on their grievances. In the plants the sit-downers, many disbelieving the announcement, found themselves surrounded by a massive wildly cheering crowd. They marched out of the factories that had been their home for so many weeks in a jubilant two-mile parade; chants of "freedom, freedom" and "join the union" could be heard over the honking of horns and singing.

The haggard forces of strikers and women and children of Flint had won over the nation's largest industry. Within a year wages had increased substantially and conditions improved. The Flint victory was to inspire the nation's working people, and soon other downtrodden, exploited workers were to organize their own sit-down strikes and win.

THE BONUS MARCHERS — 1932

The United States Army turned on to American citizens — just fellows like myself, down on their luck, dispirited, hopeless. My mood was one of despair. It was an experience that stands apart from all others in my life. So all the misery and suffering had finally come to this — soldiers marching with their guns against American citizens. I had nothing but bitter feelings toward Herbert Hoover that night.

— Thomas L. Stokes, reporter who witnessed the Bonus March

The Depression was a miserable, devastating period for Americans. Perhaps those who felt it most bitterly were the unemployed veterans of World War I who had fought to "save the world for democracy" and faced joblessness and starvation at home. In 1924 Congress had passed a bonus bill for veterans which provided adjusted service certificates for every ex-serviceman, payable in twenty years. To the hard-hit veteran, relief was desperately needed during the

Depression, and early in 1932, Representative Wright Patman of Texas introduced a bill providing for immediate payment of the bonus.

Unemployed veterans of World War I came from all over the United States to rally support for the bill in Washington, D.C. The "Bonus Expeditionary Force" was a cross section of different races, different backgrounds, from cities and towns all over the country. Beginning in May of 1932 thousands of veterans journeyed to Washington, hopping freights, hitching rides, walking. Some brought their families with them, piled into old jalopies and trucks. All had no means of employment or support; they were destitute, hoping for government action and the passage of the new bonus bill. Veterans and their families found housing in abandoned tenements, or made shelters out of cardboard boxes, scraps of tarpaper roofing and anything they could salvage, borrow or beg. Up to twenty-five thousand marchers came to Washington, a poor people's lobby at the great capitol. But the Senate voted against the Patman bill by a huge margin of 62 to 18.

Yet the veterans, more hopeless than ever, did not leave Washington, much to the chagrin of the Hoover Administration. More marchers arrived and the Bonus Army continued to parade around the capitol. They had nowhere else to go.

Hoover was determined to evict the Bonus marchers. The police evacuated the hungry, shabby veterans and their families from buildings and tents. Some fighting ensued, and Hoover ordered the War Department to send in the army to help the police.

General Douglas MacArthur was the commander of the forces: four troops of cavalry, four companies of infantry, a machine gun squadron and six tanks. His aide was Colonel Dwight D. Eisenhower, and another officer was Major George S. Patton, Jr. Troops using tear gas cleared the old buildings and set them on fire. Then MacArthur sent his forces across Anacostia bridge where the marchers were encamped on the mud flats along the river. Thousands of men, women and children fled before the charging troops. There was no resistance possible as troops lobbed tear gas bombs into the huts and set them on fire. Jalopies were wrecked, veterans' possessions were destroyed. Many marchers were injured by clubs, bayonets, sabers and thousands were stricken by gas. An eleven-week old baby died from being gassed, and a child was partially blinded. Two veterans were shot to death.

The victorious MacArthur said, after the veterans were driven out by gas, tanks and guns, "That was a bad-looking mob. It was animated by the essence of revolution." The public, however, was outraged by the brutal action of the government, siding with the plight of the destitute marchers, the veterans and their families, beaten from the capitol by their own troops. After this incident the American people were ready for a new administration. The president became the butt of every Depression joke. "Hooverville" was the name of any town of unemployed people and "Hoover blankets" were newspapers used by the poor to keep warm. The protest was registered at the polls that November as Roosevelt and the New Deal were the people's overwhelming choice.

THE SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE — 1934

Longshoremen were hired off the streets "like a bunch of sheep" said Harry Bridges, union leader, describing the "shape-up," a mob of workmen struggling for only one day's work, desperately hoping for the foreman's favor. Every morning at 6 a.m. the San Francisco Embarcadero was like a slave market. Longshoremen were unorganized, the only union being the corrupt "Blue Book," a company union. With the Depression, the misery of longshoremen's lives deepened. The tonnage of all Pacific coast ports had fallen off, and more and more workers competed for fewer jobs on the waterfront. Longshoremen demanded that the shipping magnates negotiate in collective bargaining. They refused and fired four leaders of the union. On May 9 1934, 12,000 longshoremen went out on strike in all Pacific coast ports, and by May 23, eight maritime unions and 35,000 workers walked out on the job.

The Industrial Association, the employer's organization and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce refused to negotiate and accused the strikers of un-American radicalism. The demands of the longshoremen were for a dollar an hour wages, a six hour day, a thirty-four hour week and a union hiring hall, but the Industrial Association responded only by red-baiting. The *Chronicle* ran a story entitled "Red Army Marching on the City," and other West Coast papers also played up the "communist threat" theme.

Led by employers, the police were determined to smash the picket lines by force. On July 3, carloads of police with gas and riot guns fought with the striking longshoremen using bricks and clubs in a furious bloody battle. The violence continued on July 5, which was known as "Bloody Thursday." Police clubbed hundreds of longshoremen and passersby and wrecked the union headquarters of the longshoremen. The governor then sent in two thousand armed National Guardsmen. "We cannot stand up against police, machine guns and National Guard bayonets," said Harry Bridges, who didn't mean they were surrendering either.

The brutality used to put down the strikers shocked the public. The solemn funeral of two workers shot by police made a huge impression and contributed to bringing on the general strike. Thirty thousand marchers slowly walked down Market Street behind the coffins. One writer, Charles G. Norris, described it in these words: A solid river of men and women who believed they had a grievance and who were expressing their resentment in this gigantic demonstration.

Union locals met and voted for a general strike, calling for solidarity of workers. On the morning of July 16, San Francisco was paralyzed. Stores were closed, streetcars did not run, factories were empty, machines were still. Nothing moved except for giant picket lines. Several thousand additional National Guardsmen were called to the city and mobs of vigilantes destroyed union offices, wrecking progressive newspaper offices, the longshoremen's soup kitchen. Police arrested several hundred old men on charges of communist conspiracy.

On July 19, conservative A.F. of L. officials announced that the central labor body had voted to end the general strike. But the workers returned to their jobs knowing their strength, unity and power. By October the longshoremen had won what they had asked for in wages and hours. They had gained a hiring hall, a method for democratic rotary hiring to replace the cruel "shape up." The strike had won dignity for workers — it was a great moral victory.

AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS

By now, the snowball was big enough to wipe out the rising sun. The big rising sun would take a little more time, but the little rising sun which was the Japanese in countless Japanese communities in the coastal states of Washington, Oregon and California presented no problem. The whisking and transporting of Japanese and the construction of camps with barbed wire and ominous towers supporting fully armed soldiers in places like Idaho and Wyoming and Arizona, places which even Hollywood scorned for background, had become skills which demanded the utmost of America's great organizing ability.

— from the preface to *No-No Boy*, by John Okada

They were farmers, workers, owners of small businesses, artists, teachers, either American-born or well settled immigrants, when suddenly by Presidential edict, they and their families were forced out of their homes, rounded up and sent to relocation camps where they were confined for three years.

Many Japanese Americans still remember well the hysteria after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the sudden contempt for everything Japanese. They remember the evacuation announcements giving them a few days' notice at most to sell their property and possessions and prepare to report to the "reception centers," bringing only what they could carry. Many can recall the deplorable conditions of the camps, the depressing barracks they had to live in, the poor quality of food, and the constant surveillance.

America had expected a full invasion of the country, with Japanese Americans acting as a fifth column, performing acts of sabotage, though no basis for this fear was ever found. Executive Order 9066, signed February 19, 1942 by President Roosevelt, authorized the evacuation, and the public welcomed the move. Over 110,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of whom were American citizens by birth, were sent to ten camps: Manzanar and Tule Lake in California, Granada in Colorado, Topaz in Utah, Heart Mountain in Wyoming, Minidoka in Idaho, Poston and Gila River in Arizona, and Rowhwer and Jerome in the Mississippi bottomlands of Arkansas.

Previous to this ultimate in "yellow peril" hysteria, Japanese had endured over fifty years of racism and discriminatory immigration and civil laws. Like other Asian groups they were not allowed to be naturalized as American citizens; they were excluded from trade unions, deprived of equal protection of the law and socially segregated. In 1908 Theodore Roosevelt negotiated the "Gentlemen's Agreement" with Japan whereby Japanese immigrants in America would be accorded improved treatment if Japan would limit emigration. In 1913 the Alien Land Law prohibited any Japanese from owning property, and in 1924 the Japanese Exclusion Law was passed. Japanese went into agricultural work in large numbers, filling a need in Hawaii and on the West Coast, and developed farming techniques and harvested crops. Many petitioned repeatedly for citizenship and struggled to gain equal rights.

To the Japanese Americans in the desolate camps in World War II, all that they had worked for was lost. Greedy buyers took advantage of the plight of the Japanese and bought their goods for only a small percentage of what they were worth. Much of their property and possessions was stolen from them outright. Children saw the spirits of their parents crushed. No one could take pride in their work — everyone was a ward of the government: American prisoners of war in America.

It was the ultimate humiliation and punishment for being Asians in America. Some resisted, as in the Manzanar riot in which two Nisei were killed by guards and many wounded. Over 25,000 young Japanese Americans served in the armed forces, many distinguishing themselves in bravery, and imprisoned parents received notices of the deaths of their sons in Italy and France and held memorial services on the barren grounds of the camps.

This quilt square was stitched by Jeanette Arakawa, who spent three years of her youth in the relocation camp of Rowhwer. She comments:

> The coal referred to in the poem by Miyuki Aoyama are the piles which could be found at certain locations in the camps. Coal was used for cooking in the mess halls as well as for burning in pot-belly stoves in each room or living unit. The temperature in Heart Mountain plunged as far as thirty below zero.

Japanese emerged from the camps in January 1945, and many determined to start new lives away from the West Coast, moving to different areas of the United States. Dedicated to preventing reoccurrence of such persecution, the Japanese American Citizens League launched a campaign to defend the rights of Asians in the United States. In 1953 Japanese were finally given the right of naturalization, and as a result of the efforts of Japanese Americans, Title II of the Internal Security Act (the Emergency Detention Act) was finally repealed, September 14, 1971.

EQUAL SCHOOLING, SOUTH 1960'S

Tessie was the first Negro child to step into that white school. There were three of them, 'the three little niggers' they were called, but Tessie stepped into the building first. I saw it with my own eyes, and I won't forget it, you can be sure. That night I said my prayers, just as I have for over sixty years, but I added something. I said, "Lord, you have started giving New Orleans your attention, at last. The whites are screaming at Tessie and me, but that's because they know You are watching; and they're mad, because they know they're bad, and they'll soon be punished, soon now that You've decided to take a hand in our lives here." That's what I said, and some more, too — because I had to repeat myself, I was so happy. The way I see it Tessie and I can be cursed every day, and it will only mean we're nearer our freedom.

— Grandmother of a six year old black child who integrated a New Orleans school, 1960, quoted from *Children of Crisis*, Robert Coles

It's more for America than for me.

— James Meredith, first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi

In a unanimous decision May 17, 1954 the Supreme Court declared racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. The Court decision on Brown vs. Board of Education was that "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. . .Liberty under law extends to the full range of conduct which an individual is free to pursue, and it cannot be restricted except for a proper governmental objective. Segregation in public education is not reasonably related to any proper governmental objective."

The following year the integration of Northern schools began, but in the South there was violent resistance to integration. Governors of some states threatened to abolish public schools rather than permit black and white children to sit in the same classrooms, and in some areas schools closed down rather than integrate. In Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957 Governor Faubus called out the Arkansas National Guard to block the entry of nine black teenagers to the Central High School. The 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army as well as federalized troops in Arkansas had to be mobilized to escort the black students to school amidst the furious white crowds.

At the same time blacks were integrating lunch counters, polling booths, and public transportation. Violence and brutality were the response to these efforts. Black homes and businesses were bombed, blacks were beaten and lynched. Whites who favored integration were intimidated and suffered economic reprisals. In Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963 a Baptist church was bombed, killing four young black girls. But the white segregationists who kept saying "never!" did not overcome.

Now in Southern cities and towns where ugly scenes of racism made the headlines in the late fifties and early sixties, black and white children are peacefully attending the same schools. The principal of Central High in Little Rock is Morris Holmes who is black. Yet in South Boston of 1974 there was the ugly familiar scene of angry racist crowds in an uproar over busing. Of integration, Pam Storay, a black student at Parkview High School in Little Rock, says "I get to know more students than before, whites and blacks, and even a few Indians and Chinese. Those Boston students should try it."

Little black children had to endure the agony of being the first to integrate many grammar schools, enduring the pain of loneliness, of being teased by white children and threatened by white adults. Miriam Nixon sewed this square. It was the sight of these brave little Americans walking heroically to school through shouting mobs held back by armed soldiers that made her want to find out more about this kind of courage and endurance, and started her closer acquaintance with black people.

Yet children of color were excluded from public schools, enslaved blacks not allowed to read or write, and after they were freed, could only attend separate, unequal schools. Chinese and Japanese children were segregated into "oriental schools," and Mexican, Latino and Indian children were also denied equal education. Indian children on reservations were forced by missionaries to deny their own culture, language and customs. Children of poor families remained illiterate because they had to work from morning until night. Poverty-stricken children who did attend school often could not learn because they were hungry. Girls were often denied education, and women were excluded from colleges and many professional schools.

Wealthy families could afford nursery schools, prep schools, the best colleges and universities. "It's not what you know but who you know" were the words the unchanging establishment that ruled the country lived by. I.Q. tests were designed for upper and middle class whites, and they were used to designate many minority children as stupid and retarded, excluding them from further education.

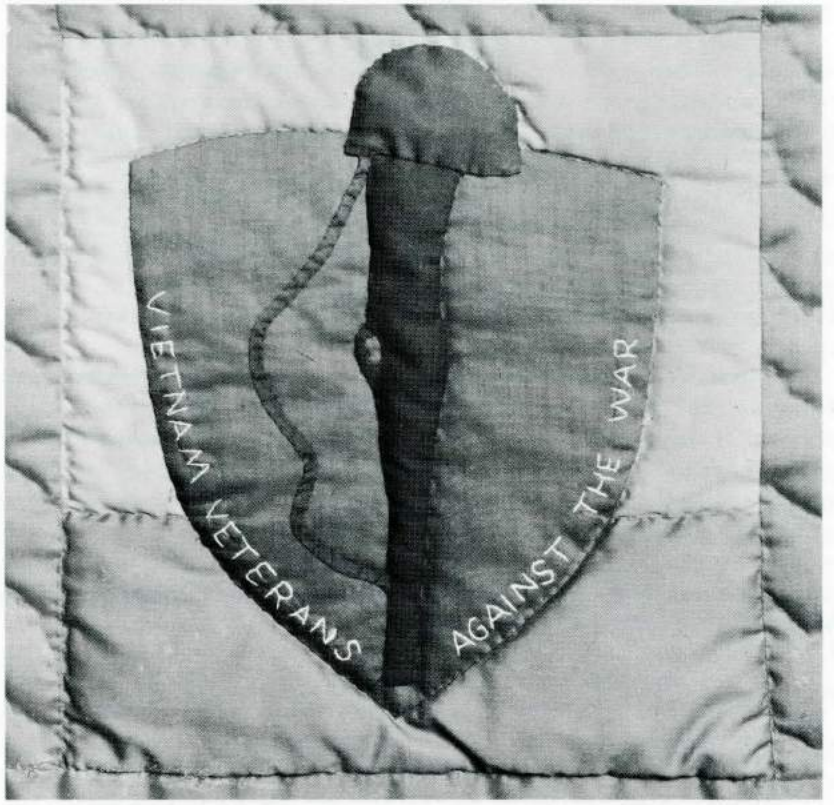
Even when schools were integrated, ideas remained segregationist. The values taught in school were all WASP values, the heros and heroines and historical events portraying the superiority of the white man and his culture. Still, children are taught that Columbus "discovered" America, that pioneers "won the West" and to remember the Alamo. Textbooks, teachers and administrators have perpetuated myths and stereotypes about minorites and women. Omission of the struggles and achievements of minorites and women have given us all a dangerously narrow view of our past, not to mention the damage done to the consciousness of all children.

In many states textbooks are being revised to include minorities; curriculum and teacher training are establishing a multicultural concept in education. Ethnic studies are being taught in high schools and multicultural programs are used in the early grades. The process of changing centuries-old concepts is slow and difficult, and often tokenism and patronizing attitudes prevail.

Yet important changes are coming about. In the Lau vs. Nichols case of January 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that the San Francisco system discriminated against non-English speaking Chinese students by failing to help them overcome their language barrier, thus denying them a "meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program." Because of this decision millions of non-English speaking children across the nation, Asians, Latinos, Mexican-Americans, can now learn in their native languages, participating in the first bilingual public education programs. The Lau vs. Nichols decision was the first time in U.S. history that the court recognized the needs of non-English speaking children.

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

I am America.
I am America dying in Asia.
— William J. Simon, from a poem, "My Country"
Winning Hearts and Minds; War Poems by Vietnam Veterans



Two hundred years ago a young pamphleteer described colonialists who left the revolutionary army during the bitter winter at Valley Forge as "summer soldiers and sunshine patriots." Recalling the images of Tom Paine, Vietnam Veterans saw themselves as "winter soldiers."

Throughout the decade of protest against the war in Indochina, many activist organizations tried to arouse the conscience of the nation, recalling the principles of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and ideals our

country was founded upon. No other group more dramatically evoked the spirit of the first American revolution than a large organization of veterans who had fought in Indochina and returned, some wounded and disabled for life, determined to tell the truth about the war to the American people.

These young men who joined the armed forces went to Vietnam thinking they were true patriots. They found themselves betrayed and part of an occupation army rather than a liberating one. Many found themselves more sympathetic to the ideals of the National Liberation Front than the South Vietnamese government they were sent to support.

Veterans returned bitter about their experiences and the senselessness of the deaths of their comrades. Many returned to find themselves jobless, with few veteran benefits and some languished in substandard veterans' hospitals. Guilt for participating in the genocidal policy of the war moved many veterans to commit themselves to ending it.

By the end of 1970 the United States, finding its Armed Forces demoralized and often mutinous, changed its tactics and began to "Vietnamize" the war, buying the South Vietnamese army and using massive U.S. air support. During this most destructive phase of the war, the veterans held the "Winter Soldier Investigation" hearings in Detroit where 600 veterans testified to U.S. atrocities in Vietnam.

Thousands of Vietnam Veterans marched along the historic Revolutionary War Route from Morristown, New Jersey to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. In the spring of '71 they demonstrated in the Capitol, using guerilla theater to bring the war home, calling their encampment, "Dewey Canyon III — a limited Incursion in the Country of Congress." In a symbolic act of their rejection of the war and the policies of the government, 800 men threw down the medals and campaign ribbons they had been awarded in Vietnam at the steps of the Capitol. A former Marine Sergeant from Connecticut, Jack Smith expressed the feelings of many veterans:

> We now strip ourselves of the medals of courage and heroism. . . those citations for gallantry and exemplary service. . . . We cast these away as symbols of shame, dishonor and inhumanity. Our tale is one of a Vietnamese people whose hearts were broken, not won. Our commanders were not concerned with lives, but body counts. Our testimony gives definition to words like genocide, racism and atrocity.

Vietnam Veterans Against the War organized self-help groups to rehabilitate those who returned plagued by drug addiction, alcoholism and psychiatric problems. The organization also agitated for better veteran benefits. In a government move to destroy VVAW, members of VVAW, the Gainesville 8, were indicted for "conspiracy" during the Republican convention in '72. An F.B.I. informant within the membership testified against those on trial. After 14 months of persecution, the veterans were finally acquitted.

WATTS

There's new strategy coming in. It'll be Molotov cocktails this month, hand grenades next month and something else next month. It'll be ballots, or it'll be bullets. It'll be liberty, or it will be death.

— Malcolm X, 1964

At the famous March on Washington, August 1963, Martin Luther King gave his stirring "I have a dream" speech at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial to a crowd of 250,000 people. The following year three civil rights workers were murdered in Mississippi, a series of riots broke out in eastern ghettos protesting murders of blacks, Alabama state troopers attacked people marching from Selma to Montgomery. There were other incidents of assassinations and beatings of black people and white sympathizers.

Langston Hughes once asked in a poem, "What happens to a dream deferred?/Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?/Or does it fester like a sore? Or does it explode?"

The answer came from a community near Los Angeles named Watts, in the summer of 1965. It was a year when the hopes of blacks were rising, with the catalyst of Vietnam and civil rights agitation. There was new assertiveness among blacks and rising anger towards the continuing neglect, benign and otherwise, by the government. The life in Watts was like that in many black ghettos; there was high unemployment, poor housing, constant police surveillance and harrassment. Watts was ready to explode.

Marquette Frye and his mother were driving home one evening and were stopped 100 yards from their home by a patrol car. The police asked them to get out of the car and wanted Frye to show them his driver's license. One policeman shoved his mother aside. Frye shoved back. He was arrested. The next day the community reacted--it was the accumulation of pent-up anger from thousands of such incidents. The people were tired of being shoved around, and they rioted against life in the ghetto, burning stores and their homes, looting. The National Guard was called and the shooting began. Thirty-five black people were killed. Two policemen were shot by other policemen. Eight hundred and eighty-three people were injured and 3,598 arrested. Property losses exceeded $46,000,000. Portions of Watts were burned to the ground. East 103rd Street, the heart of Watts, was known as Charcoal Alley.

Hattie Kelly sewed the Watts square. She was living just two blocks away from the spot where the holocaust began. Hattie and the other black women of the quilting group felt that "Watts was more than just a riot." Most of the blacks in this country saw it as a strong outcry against injustice and oppression that had been accepted for too long. The outburst of anger from Watts gave blacks a certain sense of pride,and forced whites to face the reality of ghettos in America and of rising black protest. Soon after Watts there were many "long, hot summers" — in Newark, New York, Chicago, Cleveland and Washington, D.C.

Watts of '65 had violence, but hope. Ten years later there remains peace and despair. The federal money and liberal political promises did not get to the root of the problems of Watts. Poverty programs, issued as appeasement to pacify the people, soon faded out. Though the government welfare system has instituted surface stability, unemployment is still the chief problem of the people of Watts, blacks continually get harrassed and shot at by police, and the dream is still deferred. The United States spent more money for a week of war in Vietnam than ten years in Watts.

THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

The overriding rule which I want to affirm is that our foreign policy must always be an extension of our domestic policy. Our safest guide to what we do abroad is always what we do at home.

— President Lyndon B. Johnson

We thought, and I say this with some embarrassment for my naivete, that adults really mean what they said, that when Presidents speak of peace they don't mean war, that when terms like democracy are bandied about they don't mean totalitarianism of the center.

— Jesse Kornbluth, *Notes from the New Underground*

Did it all begin with the Civil Rights struggle, or with the 1964 Free Speech Movement at Berkeley or when hundreds of students in the spring of 1960 were washed down the marble steps of San Francisco City Hall protesting the hearings of the House on UnAmerican Activities? Well, as we should know by now, everything in our history is related: there are no "isolated incidents."

It was a time when the cover was blown off all institutions. They were all vulnerable: the university which Mario Savio labeled a great big "factory" with students as "raw materials", the armed forces which David Harris told young men to "resist", the American system which Carl Ogelsby accused of being a "corporate state" and middle-class values which countless young people called hypocritical. And Dr. Benjamin Spock who raised them during the complacent Cold War years got arrested with thousands of his children in the biggest bust in U.S. history, May Day 1971.

The Vietnam War was the catalyst for campus uprisings. The first national demonstration against the war, organized by Students for a Democratic Society on April 17, 1965, was a March on Washington to end the war in Vietnam. Students saw the war was morally wrong and were outraged with government deception of the American people. As the war escalated and protest mounted with hostile and violent response from the authorities, students saw it not as an aberration, "a mistake," but a logical extension of American foreign policy.

The draft directly affected students' lives, and in the spring of 1966 General Lewis Hershey announced resrictions on student deferments. Students whose academic standing was poor would be drafted. Faculty and students protested the use of grades for Selective Service purposes and the cooperation of colleges and universities in the draft process. Throughout the nation there were vehement reactions to this issue, and as a result many institutions refused to supply the Selective Service with any information. Young men saw the ludicrousness of going through college before being sent off to fight in Vietnam. Young men and women tried to stop troop trains, army buses, and blocked induction centers, risking arrests, clubbings and being run down. Young men burned their draft cards; many others went into exile in Canada.

Students called attention to the complicity of the universities in the war by demonstrating at laboratories that did military research, trashing ROTC buildings and blocking military recruiters and representatives of defense contractors from entering the placement centers. Students and faculty pointed out the "Vietnams" in our own country, the ghettos outside the privileged campuses, the destruction of the environment, the continuing racism and poverty. There was agitation for changing what was being taught, the established, traditional ideas not only irrelevant, but fallacious and dangerous. New courses were demanded as well as acceptance of more women and minority faculty members. In 1968 at San Francisco State College, which Jerry Rubin called a "streetcar college", there was the first Third World Student Strike, organized by minority students calling for a comprehensive ethnic studies program, minority student and faculty recruitment, a more responsive administration, and in the words of one picket sign, "education, not regimentation."

Colleges became the center of political activity. Teach-ins involved not only students and professors, but housewives, workers, everyone in the community. There were an incalculable number of speeches made on campus. Millions of leaflets were distributed by students canvassing neighborhoods, convincing fellow citizens of the injustices of the war, stressing priorities at home.

There were many levels of activism. Some students fasted, practicing civil disobedience, others organized guerrilla theater. Some stressed reform within the system. Students influenced LBJ's decision not to run again in '68. They boosted the campaigns of Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy, and four years later, George McGovern. Some felt it essential to cause disruptions ("No business as usual!" "Bring the war home!") and to take the system apart. There were numerous bombings and acts of arson. The extensive surveillance of student groups and the infiltration by paid provacateurs and F.B.I. agents encouraged and often initiated violence. The 1975 Senate hearings on the F.B.I. and C.I.A. have revealed testimony of agents that taught protesters how to invade draft boards and to make explosives.

Student protests violated all accepted forms of etiquette. Commencements became protests, students given awards and prizes by groups such as the American Legion refused to accept them. Establishment speakers found that they were welcome only at armed forces academies; their presence on some campuses guaranteed riots. Students invaded trustee meetings, formal dinners and ceremonies. They saw the irony of being called "rude" by those they considered war profiteers and criminals.

"The connection between the violence here and abroad must be made: the violence at home will not end while the violence abroad continues," warned Yale class speaker William M. Thompson '69 before a dismayed audience of well-dressed parents who had not expected such a mood at graduation. He concluded his valedictory with this plea: "As long as the fighting continues at its present level, our opposition to the war will also continue. Immediate action must be taken to extricate us from the disaster that is Vietnam. The war must end now; and the fight for our cities, for our nation, for our people must begin."

But the war raged on, and in the spring of 1970, the U.S. invaded Cambodia. Throughout the nation there were massive demonstrations in response to this widening of the war. At Princeton, the bastion of collegian elitism, nearly half the student body came to the university chapel within an hour of Nixon's "incursion" speech to call for action. On May 4 at Kent State, Ohio, the heartland of Middle America, the National Guard was moblilzed to put down student agitation. Governor James Rhodes called the protesters "worse than Brown Shirts and Communists and vigilantes — they're the worse type of people that we harbor in America." Nixon called them "bums". From a grassy hill the troopers fired on students and faculty members walking to class. Four students were killed, ten wounded. A week later two students were shot to death and twelve others wounded at Jackson State, Mississippi, a predominantly black college. Agitation over the war and racial tension caused campus disturbances, and police, without a warning, raked a women's dormitory with bullets. Students standing in front of the building were struck down; the grass was soaked with blood.

These two incidents aroused students as they had never been before — it was as if their brothers and sisters had been massacred. Students went on strike, shutting down campuses. Colleges that remained open were "reconstituted", organizing teach-ins and community canvasing. Hundreds of thousands of people went to rallies and demonstrations.

In the following years petitioning and demonstrating continued, but with the withdrawal of troops and the reliance on air power and on the South Vietnamese Army, the intensity of anti-war protest waned. Activist students became more and more frustrated over the unending war. They had tried everything and many times over. Students who continued to protest suffered expulsions and suspensions for their part in campus disturbances, and admission offices adopted policies of recruiting more apolitical students to cool the campuses. By 1975 when the war was finally over, after years of agitation of "peace now", the campuses hardly reacted. Retrenchment had begun.

The student movement of the '60's and early '70's has been discredited by the press, politicians and historians. Yet its effect is felt in our lives. Students forced Americans to confront the issues of Vietnam and U.S. intervention around the world and challenged American values and traditions. They affected educational, political, cultural and social change. Most important, they made it impossible for the government to wage total war — unleashing nuclear weapons — on the Vietnamese people. The Indochina war lasted three college generations, and each generation fought against genocide all over again.

This square on the quilt was inspired by the action of Allison Krause, one of the four students killed at Kent State. She had placed a flower in the rifle of a National Guardsman saying, "Flowers are better than bullets."

THE FARAH STRIKE

It was people like Willie Farah who long ago stole our land and paid cheaply for our ancestors. It is time that we, the Chicanos, stand up and say That's enough.
— Farah striker

In May 1972 four thousand Chicano workers, eighty-five percent women, walked out on the job at Farah Manufacturing Company in Texas and New Mexico. Willie Farah, owner of the wealthy garment company, ran his operation on paternalism, air-conditioned plants, free donuts and bus rides to work, but there was no job security, no maternity benefits, low pay, speed up and discrimination on the job. When workers tried to organize in 1969, Willie Farah refused to negotiate, firing union supporters.

The center of the strike was El Paso, Texas where the Farah Company had been growing rich off the labor of Chicano workers for over fifty years. The average take-home pay was $69 a week. When workers had a union rally, supervisors from Farah were taking pictures and writing down names of workers. When seven union supporters were fired the next day, hundreds of workers walked out. In the following weeks thousands joined the strike at other plants.

One young woman, Virgie Delgado and her three sisters worked at Farah to support their family of nine. As for so many other working women, it was a hard decision for her to walk out on the job, but she felt it was the only right thing to do and she called on other workers to strike as well.

> My legs were shaking the whole time. We were really scared because we didn't know what was going to happen. My three sisters joined us and all these guys and girls followed us. By the time we got to the front door I looked back and saw 150 people behind us.
>
> We were about to walk out the door when the supervisor stepped in front of me and asked us where did we think we were going. So I tole him he had better step out of the way or I wouldn't be responsible for what I would do. Then he said for us to punch out and I said no, we're walking out and he'd better get out of the way. He was really shocked that I talked like that so he moved out of the way and we walked outside. Then we saw all the other people outside who had left the day before and we were really happy. We started hugging each other and singing even though we didn't know each other. It was really something.

The strike involved nine plants, and the management of Farah, the biggest pants manufacturing company in the U.S., claimed that there was no strike, just an "unauthorized walkout." Farah obtained a court injunction that said pickets had to be 50 feet apart. Over 800 strikers were arrested. "If anything," said Willie Farah, "we've been guilty of keeping some people around here too long, hoping they would straighten out. The union did us a favor by cleaning house, getting the troublemakers out. With that fifth gone, the plant is more cohesive." He brought in busloads of Mexican workers from across the border to break the strike, pitting one group of exploited people against another.

Across the nation there were Support Farah Strikers demonstrations and "Boycott Farah" became a rallying cry. Supporters organized pickets of stores that sold Farah pants, and Farah Strike Support Committees were organized throughout the United States.

In February 1974 Willie Farah, responding to heavy losses and pressure from the National Labor Relations Board, finally gave in and negotiated with strikers. He agreed to rehire fired strikers and to grant workers the benefits they were asking for. A union was born in a victory for Chicano workers and an example to working women everywhere.

THE UNITED FARM WORKERS

We are the Campesinos of the rich soil of this land; we are the poorest poor, the forgotten, whose destiny has been controlled by the lucky few who have plenty. Our lot was tossed about by law-makers, and then cast aside for final burial deep in the archives of Congress.

We are Campesinos who bring food to the American table three times a day. In the fields we work from sunrise till sunset, under the hot sun of summer, in the freezing cold of winter for slave wages in order to survive...to feed and clothe our children.

We are the Campesinos who were pitted one race against another, storing hatred in our hearts instead of understanding for each other. We were exploited, fired and replaced on the spot, and discriminated against by the few greedy.

— from U.F.W. leaflet

The campesinos, or field hands, were the most isolated of all of America's workers, away from public view, their attempts to organize beaten down with intimidation and brutality. Early strikes were costly in worker's lives, limbs and jobs. Not until 1965 when a farm worker's union was organized by Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta and others did a farm worker's movement really begin.

At an AFL-CIO convention in San Francisco, Victor Reuther of the United Auto Workers told the handful of farm workers' representatives in a meeting, "When we first began we were fewer than you. We were only seven." He said that General Motors told the workers in 1935 that the company could not afford to pay unionized workers, that they would go broke. And now the growers are saying the same thing to farm workers, Reuther pointed out, that they would go broke if they paid union wages. "Look at General Motors now, and look at our union," he said, encouraging the farm workers to organize and fight.

The United Farm Workers received its first boost from UAW president Walter Reuther, a labor leader, unlike others, who did not forget the struggle of building his own union. Reuther gave moral and financial support to the U.F.W. The farm workers also received encouragement and publicity from the late Robert Robert F. Kennedy, who came to Delano when Chavez was breaking his 25-day fast in March of 1968.

The United Farm Workers' struggle became a movement in which everyone could help out. It involved the shopper who looked at the "specially priced" grapes at the supermarket and pushed the cart on, the student who demanded the college serve only U.F.W. lettuce, the wine lovers who shopped

only from a list of union approved wineries, and singers and performers who donated their talents to benefit concerts. Nuns, priests, students, children, teachers, men and women from all walks of life joined picket lines and demonstrations, boycotting stores that sold non-union produce. The boycott of California table grapes which began in New York City in 1968 proved to be an effective tool in forcing growers to negotiate with the U.F.W.

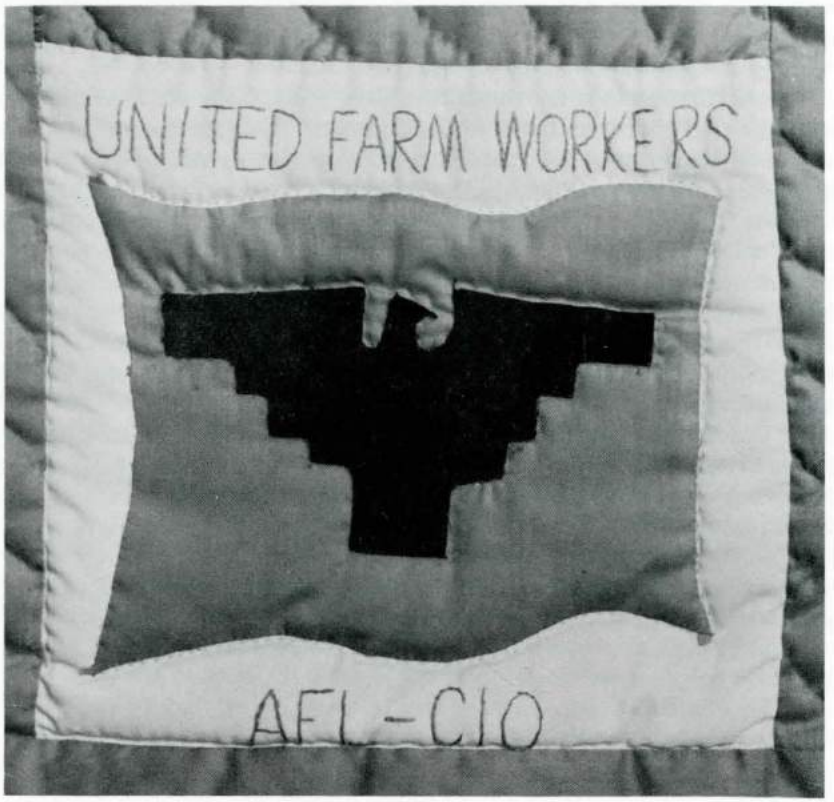
U.F.W. strikers and supporters have always faced strong opposition from growers, harassment and assaults from sheriffs, deputies and company "goon squads." Their victories have been won nonviolently, with patience and continual appeal to the conscience of the opposition. The U.F.W. movement is a bread and roses fight. Chavez has emphasized the *means* of building a union above merely achieving the end. In 1969 he wrote a letter to E. L. Barr, President of the California Grape and Tree Fruit League in reply to the accusation that the U.F.W. uses violence and terrorist tactics, saying of the farm workers:

> They have been under the gun, they have been kicked and beaten and herded by dogs, they have been cursed and ridiculed, they have been stripped and chained and jailed, they have been sprayed with poisons used in the vineyards. They have been taught not to lie down and die or to flee in shame, but to resist with every ounce of human endurance and spirit. To resist not with retaliation in kind but to overcome with love and compassion, with ingenuity and creativity, with hard work and longer hours, with stamina and patient tenacity, with truth and public appeal, with friends and allies, with mobility and discipline, with politics and law, and with prayer and fasting. They were not trained in a month or even a year; after all, this new harvest season will mark our fourth full year of strike and even now we continue to plan and prepare for the years to come. Time accomplishes for the poor what money does for the rich.

Chavez, whose family was so poor that he had to work in the fields instead of going to high school, has given the United Farm Workers a philosophy and purpose beyond winning better wages and conditions. And this is why he is so feared by agribusiness and industry. In his letter to the grower, he concludes:

> This letter does not express all that is in my heart, Mr. Barr. But if it says nothing else it says that we do not hate you or rejoice to see your industry destroyed; we hate the agribusiness system that seeks to keep us enslaved and we shall overcome and change it not by retaliation or bloodshed but by a determined nonviolent struggle carried on by those masses of farm workers who intend to be free and human.
>
> Sincerely yours, Cesar E. Chavez

Farm workers can vividly describe the life in the fields before the union. Philip Vera Cruz who came in 1926 from the Philippines and is now second



vice-president of U.F.W. recalls the conditions of work in his first farm labor job. "There were no decent toilet facilities and the sanitation was terrible. There were two drinking cups for thirty workers," he remembers, "workers got sick from diseases." He and other Filipino workers organized a strike of asparagas workers in 1948. Exploited Chinese and Japanese workers also organized their own separate groups. Strikes of one racial group could not succeed in building a union, he realized, and only the United Farm Workers in appealing to workers of all races could affect change. Chicanos and Mexican immigrants make up the largest group in the U.F.W., then Filipinos, and there are Arabs, Portuguese, blacks and whites in the U.F.W.

Agribusiness is an eight million dollar a year business in California where one fourth of all fruit and vegetables eaten in America are grown. The big companies earn immense profits from non-union workers. Poor workers often bring their families in the fields to help out, and children as young as eight pick

fruit, in violation of child labor laws. Pesticides, sprayed from low-flying airplanes on plants and people alike are the chief cause of illness of the farm workers — the other is heat prostration. Cesar Chavez, commenting on the effect of the laboratory on the taste of fruit and vegetables compared the flavor of a big ripe strawberry to a piece of cardboard.

U.F.W. organizers and supporters have pointed out the exploitation of both the worker and consumer by agribusiness. The work has paid off. The short hoe which has bent the backs of thousands of workers has been finally outlawed. Sanitary conditions in the fields have improved. In the summer of 1975 the United Farm Workers won a major victory when the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act was passed. It meant for the first time that farm workers were free to choose their own union. Many of the elections won by Teamsters who are in alliance with the growers are being contested in court. Workers have been intimidated and signed with Teamsters in fear for their lives and jobs. U.F.W. organizers have not been allowed to go near some fields to talk to workers and have been arrested for trespassing.

"Old habits, stretching back ninety years, die hard for the police and the local judges. They are still inclined to look upon the grower as the symbol of legitimacy, upon the union cadres as rude peasants in revolt," writes Francis Carney in "The Progress of Cesar Chavez", *The New York Review of Books*, Nov. 13, 1975.

But that was the situation of every labor struggle in the past, and the farm workers are continuing the old fight with passion and determination.

THE ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

. . . If it is unpatriotic to tear down the flag [which is the symbol of the country], why isn't it more unpatriotic to desecrate the country itself — to pollute, despoil and ravage the air, land and water? Such environmental degradation makes the "pursuit of happiness" ragged indeed. Why isn't it unpatriotic to engage in colossal waste that characterizes so many defense contracts?

— Ralph Nader

This was a vastly beautiful land when the Indians lived in it, so full of natural wonders and a variety of breathtaking landscapes, clear waters, lovely fields and woods and bountiful resources. Now much of that magnificence is ruined. Americans have been using the country's resources as if they will last forever. Mountains, lakes, rivers and forests have been devoured by "progress." Our coastlines have been marred by developers. The Great Lakes,

rivers such as the Potomac and the Hudson are all polluted. So many combustible pollutants have been dumped into the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland that it is now inflammable. Lake Erie, once a beautiful and productive inland water, is now a dead sea. The air we breathe is sometimes so filthy and noxious that it endangers our health and is fatal to those with pulmonary illnesses.

Warnings against people's destruction of the environment and consequent self-destruction have been issued by conservationists in the past, but during the sixties there arose a nationwide awareness of America's wasteful way of life, the severity of pollution and the lateness of the time. "Ecology" became the new household word for a movement which encompassed everything from recycling cans and bottles to stopping off-shore drilling and strip mining. Rachel Carson brought national attention to the dangers of pesticides to wildlife and humans in her bestseller, *Silent Spring*. A number of ecology organizations sprang up and some older ones such as the Sierra Club attracted greater interest. Communities organized recycling centers and many youth groups worked in ecology projects. People were encouraged to be aware of everyday wasting of all forms of energy. Ecologists pointed out that automobiles cause 60 percent of air pollution, and more people began to drive less and to walk or bicycle short distances.

Speakers and programs throughout the country emphasized the immediate need for conserving energy and other resources. Some ecologists reminded Americans that we must share this planet, that the United States — with only six percent of the world's population — consumes 40-60 percent of the world's resources. We waste billions of dollars of food and materials every year while many around the world starve to death. Producers dump milk to keep prices up while ghetto children go hungry.

Few of America's technological and scientific developments have been directed toward preserving or restoring what we have taken from nature. In his essay "Nature Under Attack," Barry Commoner writes:

> The crisis in the environment reveals a potentially fatal flaw in the social use of modern science and technology. We have developed an enormous competence to intervene in the natural world: We can release fearful nuclear explosions, spray insecticides over the countryside, and produce millions of automobiles. But at the same time we are unable to predict the full biological consequences of nuclear war or to avoid risks to our livelihood and health from the side effects of insecticides or from the smog that our autos produce. In the eager search for the benefits of modern science and technology we have blundered into the accompanying hazards before we were aware of them.

Many developments and changes to improve the environment are possible but industries refuse to comply because their foremost concern is maximum profit. Workers fearing loss of jobs are played off against environmentalists. If a town decides to pass a law preventing an industry from dumping in the local river, the company can threaten to move elsewhere, causing economic hardship to the people employed.

Although personal and community efforts have influenced the thinking of Americans, effective change must entail a major reorientation of the government's priorities and resources. Environmentalists have agitated and lobbied for nationwide anti-pollution laws to be strictly enforced on industrial polluters who do the most damage to the nation's environment. The federal budget provides token support for conservation of energy and resources, while major portions are allocated to defense industries. Industrial polluters not only go unpunished, they are given governmental assistance.

Conservationists' long-held concern about the eventual exhaustion of our fossil fuels has been ignored by government policy, and motorists' dependence on gasoline and the panic caused by the oil shortage has given oil companies greater advantages and record profits. No concerted effort has been made in the areas of search and research for alternative sources of energy. The push to build nuclear plants proceeds helter-skelter with no known safe method of disposing of plutonium waste products that may endanger future generations. Many billion-dollar military projects have been mothballed after construction. The disposal of radioactive wastes has never been satisfactorily resolved.

The ecology movement has called our attention to the destructive nature of our present lifestyle. It has also brought to our consciousness that many conveniences we consider essential to modern living have actually threatened our quality of life. In America's insatiable drive for enterprise, people have been misused as well as the land. We have been confronted with the problem and asked what can be done, and ecologists have offered answers and solutions. Major changes have to be made in our economic and political system. As Catherine Harris writes in her essay "Man in Nature: Model for a New Radicalism":

> The driving factor in the present ecological movement is the increased pace of conspicuous deterioration. More people than ever before are becoming concerned. It is becoming more and more difficult to avoid seeing the connection between the central defects of the American profit-oriented private-enterprise economy and the all too evident environmental destruction.

America's priorities must be clean air, water, effective public transportation, clean cities free of poverty. Our nation can abolish unemployment by embarking on an extensive program of reconversion of polluting and destructive industries into life-supporting systems. To avert environmental disaster and the resulting damage to people, we cannot do otherwise. We have sent men to the moon, but it is here we must continue to live.

THE PRISON MOVEMENT

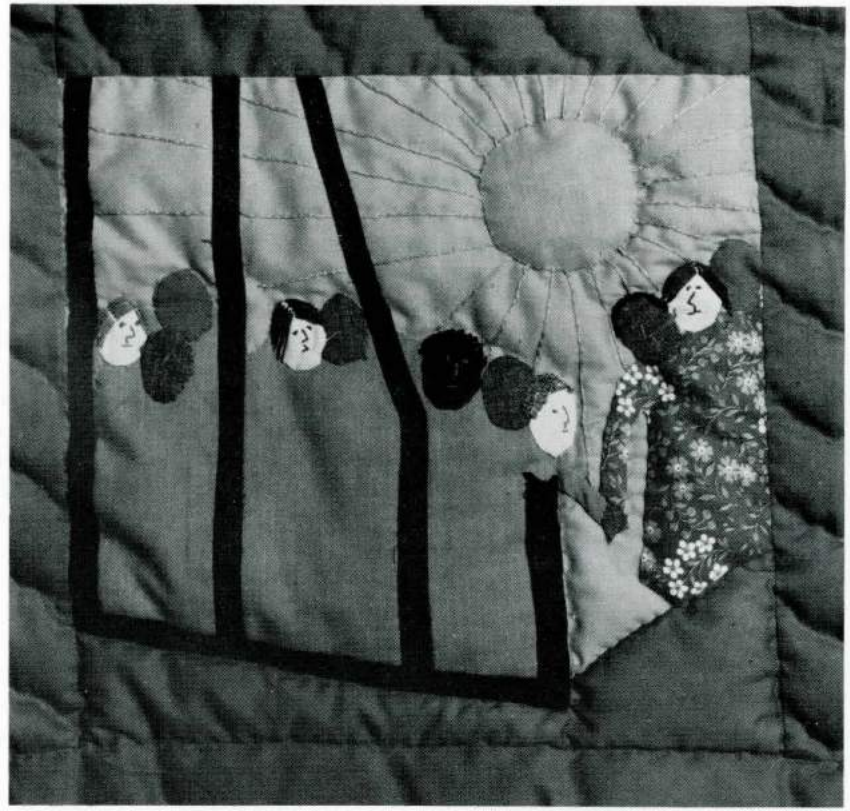
...we do not want to rule, we only want to live. But if any of you gentlemen own dogs...you are treating them better than we are treated here.
— An Attica inmate to observers, September 1971

...prison can make you look back on a lifetime of bitterness...
— from a poem by Erika Huggins, Niantic Prison, 1970

Many of the events and movements commemorated in this quilt have involved leaders and participants going to jail. Great women and men have received prison sentences for their religious, political and social beliefs. Union organizers, workers, political activists, clergy, abolitionists, writers, students, newspaper people — all have served time. Imprisonment for many was hardly a time of defeat. The socialist labor leader Eugene Debs was nominated for President in 1920 and while he was prisoner number 9653 in Atlanta Penitentiary, he received nearly a million votes. After the Suffragists were arrested, many of them wrote reports on prison conditions that shocked the public and led to investigations. In Danbury Prison 1943, 19 conscientious objectors went on work strike to stop Jim Crow seating in the dining hall and after 135 days stopped segregation in the prison.

In the last decade huge numbers of Americans were arrested in the cause of civil rights and peace, and numerous white middle-class people have experienced for the first time the horrors of imprisonment. Many political prisoners have emerged further radicalized and ready to work for prison reform. Some college students serving short sentences for blocking induction centers or for demonstrations left jails full of men and women who would be going in and out of "the joint" for the rest of their lives. They became aware of a system of double-justice. The contact with poor, uneducated, people of color who could not afford lawyers and were kept from their legal rights deeply affected many whites who had "allowed" themselves to be arrested. Many groups organized in communities to agitate for prison reform and to help former prisoners.

Within prisons men and women inmates have organized and agitated. One black man who had served several years for draft resistance said, "The guards were the most brutal when we tried to form a community." Women prisoners are given tranquilizers to keep them docile. Many have been subject to abuse and sexual attacks by guards. Agitating for better conditions by fasting and petitioning and going on work strike, prisoners have suffered severe reprisals. "Troublemakers," those resisting the deplorable prison system, suffer longer sentences, and parole is used as a tool of control.



In the 60's there were rebellions in prisons throughout the United States. Prisoners protested cruel and unusual punishment such as "strip cells," poor food and recreational controls. In 1968, 500 prisoners in San Quentin went on work strike protesting the new sentencing standards of the Adult Authority, and their lack of legal rights when facing the Adult Authority. In 1970 an uprising at Rikers Island, New York City lasted four days and 1500 prisoners were involved. Two thousand, one hundred prisoners were put into lockup for a work strike at Folsom Prison. Among their demands were abolition of indeterminate sentence and the Adult Authority, and the freeing of political prisoners. In 1971 two sheriffs' deputies were held hostage in a New Orleans jail for eight hours to dramatize demands for improved conditions and speedier trials, and women prisoners in the New Orleans' Women's Detention Home staged a sympathy strike.

The prison system was not designed to "rehabilitate." It damages people, often permanently, mentally and physically. It has conspired against revolutionaries to keep them behind bars for life. The life and writings of George

Jackson are testimony to the brutality and injustice of the American penal system. In 1970 Jackson wrote to another prisoner, Angela Davis:

> When the menu reads steak we get a piece of rotten steer (I hope), the size of a quarter. When it reads cake we get something like cornbread. Those are the best things served. When two guys fight, the darker guy will get shot. To supplement their incomes the pigs will bring anything into the prison and sell it to the convict who smuggles money in from his visits. Now black people don't visit their kin in the joint much and those that do can't afford to give up any money. So we have less of everything that could make life more comfortable — and safe (weapons are brought in, too).

When Jackson was 18 years old he was sentenced from one year to life for stealing $70 from a gas station, and most of his 11 years in prison were spent in solitary confinement. Refusing to be broken, or to be in complicity with the guards against other prisoners, Jackson worked to abolish the cruel system of the indeterminate sentence which kept him and so many others in a state of hopelessness and at the mercy of the Adult Authority. Time after time Jackson was denied parole, and in 1970 he was charged with killing a prison guard. Jackson was transferred from Soledad to San Quentin where he was gunned down by a guard, August 21, 1971.

Shortly after George Jackson's death, Attica Correctional Facility in New York State focused national attention on the cruelty of the prison system. On September 9, prisoners of Attica rebelled against their jailers demanding only to be treated as human beings. They held 38 guards hostage and drew up a proposal for improving prison conditions. Nelson Rockefeller, then Governor of New York, refused to come to Attica to help in negotiations saying, "I do not feel that my physical presence on the site can contribute to a peaceful settlement." On September 13, state troopers, the police and National Guard had surrounded Attica. Helicopters dropped tear gas and troopers poured gunfire into the prison yard. During the siege there were news reports that the inmates had brutally slain the guards (eleven died) but investigations showed that all had died from gunfire. Some hostages testified that the prisoners had actually protected them with their bodies.

> Forty-three citizens of New York State died at Attica Correctional Facility between September 9 and 13, 1971. Thirty-nine were killed and more than 80 were wounded by gunfire during the fifteen minutes it took the State Police to retake the prison on September 13. With the exception of Indian massacres in the late nineteenth century the State Police assault which ended the four-day prison uprising was the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War.
>
> — Office Report of the New York State Special Committee on Attica

Many of the reforms proposed by the inmates during the uprising had been considered by the authorities, but they had been reluctant to move. The prisoners were driven to rebellion by intolerable conditions. Before the massacre they had requested amnesty for their part in the uprising, to which Governor Rockefeller replied:

> I do not have the constitutional authority to grant such a demand and I would not even if I had the authority to because to do so would undermine the very essence of our free society — the fair and impartial application of the law.

Tom Wicker, an observer at Attica during the siege saw the bitter irony of such words and wrote in his article "The Men in D Yard " (*Esquire*, March, 1975):

> In a country where so many wealthy or well-represented lawbreakers could go free, where the killers at Kent State and Jackson State had not even been prosecuted, where minorities — black and Mexican-American, for two good examples — suffered from openly prejudiced law in whole regions, where the poor and disadvantaged of all races usually felt the full weight of police, courts and prisons — in that country "the equal application of the law" was to be upheld in the case of the Attica brothers!

Many of the Watergate defendants, men who had lied and cheated the American people, who had contributed to the deaths of American soldiers and Vietnamese, were given light sentences in country-club correctional facilities, and the biggest offender of them all, Richard M. Nixon was pardoned.

This square was sewn in prison by Andrea Holman Burt, a young woman who is imprisoned in San Bernadino on a conspiracy charge. Andrea was active in the anti-war movement and was involved in prison reform. She wanted this square to express the need for public concern in changing the prison system, symbolically showing hands from the outside reaching out to those behind bars.

WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY

I have been discriminated against far more because I am a female than because I am black.

— U.S. Representative Shirley Chisolm

School is horrible. It wouldn't be so bad if it were an all girl school. But it isn't. Anyway, it's like the boys are all kings and we poor girls are their slaves. At P.E. time one day I asked my teacher if the girls' team captains could be in charge of the kick ball game. She told me the boys know what they're doing. I know that they're asking for a sock in the stomach when they try and boss us around. . . .
The girls aren't allowed to wear pants to school because our principal thinks that girls are supposed to be 'dainty' and always wear dresses and not be able to run or flop down on the grass when they feel like it.

— Kristy Hawkins, age 9, grade 5, on "girls liberation" from *Goodbye to all That,* newspaper by San Diego women, May 5-19 issue, 1971

Women of the '70s have found that there is as much opposition to the feminist movement now as there was during the Suffrage movement and that American society continues to be a man's world, teaching the female her "proper" place from the time she is born. In 1776 Abigail Adams warned her husband, "If particular care and attention are not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound to obey any laws in which we have no voice or representation." Two hundred years later, women still have virtually no effective representation in governing this nation.

Yet the recent women's movement has made a great deal of progress in many areas. From the mid-sixties on, women have fought on many fronts. They decided, at last, that they had waited too long, supporting other movements only to wind up making the coffee and taking notes, and the battle cry became "free our sisters, free ourselves." Women agitated for equal pay, equal hiring practices, set up women's centers, health clinics, women's libraries, childcare centers, galleries and presses. They have fought against sexism in the media and in textbooks, and organized against rape. Feminist women ridiculed beauty contests, *Playboy* and condemned insulting ads that portrayed women as stupid or as sex objects. Women have agitated for strong enforcement of nationwide anti-sex discrimination laws. They have challenged specific sexist laws and practices of various states, such as credit unions' discrimination toward women and married women's unequal right to property.

Consciousness-raising groups have helped women from all walks of life to see the need for liberation and means of achieving it. Third World women have organized their own groups, defining their needs and goals which differ from those of white middle-class women. With the lowest median income in America, women of color have fought for increased opportunities, exposed exploitation and racism, opposed white standards of beauty and behavior, and affirmed their right to self-determination.

The recent physical achievements of women in sports has enhanced the self-esteem of girls and women. Women tennis stars, jockeys, gymnasts and swimmers have won national attention. Females have entered the sports arena which has been for the most part reserved for males only. Girls have joined the previously all-boys Little League, soccer and other sports. Title IV of the 1972 Education Amendments Act, a law enacted with the efforts of Representative Edith Green, has won rights for women in many areas of education and has stimulated the drive for women's athletic rights in schools. College budgets for men's sports are 30 times larger than the allocations for women's, and women have called attention to this gross injustice. The image of girls and women as weak, passive, fawning spectators at men's gladiator shows has been changed, giving women positive self-images and encouragement to develop physical abilities.

Women have struggled with little help from the federal government.

> This administration has done nothing of significance in the field of women's rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Not a single important policy decision or legislative recommendation advancing women's rights has been made. Not only have fewer women been appointed to responsible positions than in past administrations, but the number of existing women office holders replaced by men in the present administration has reduced the net record to minus one. (Representative Constance Dwyer to President Nixon in 1969)

But the government did not ignore the women's movement. Senate Committee hearings of 1975 on the F.B.I. reveal that during Nixon's term of office informants infiltrated the women's liberation movement, monitored its activities and employed disruptive tactics.

The women's movement has received no encouragement in the following administration. President Ford appointed John Paul Stevens to replace Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, ignoring pleas to appoint a woman in the all-male court. The first demand of the National Organization for Women (NOW) at its first national conference in 1967 was that "the

U.S. Congress immediately pass the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution to provide that 'Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.' " Needing five more states to ratify before adoption, the E.R.A. still continues to face opposition, and those against it have fostered erroneous fears that it will ruin the institution of the family, create unisex toilets, draft women, etc.

The E.R.A. will guarantee equality before the law for women, which the Constitution has yet to provide. In November of 1975, state equal rights amendments were defeated in both New Jersey and New York. An anti-feminist campaign and media distortion of the women's movement has played on people's prejudices and pitted traditional women against feminists.

During International Women's Year 1975 there was heightened discussion and agitation on women's issues. American women learned from the examples of women around the world. At Mexico City women from many countries met to discuss the common problems of women struggling against patriarchal societies. Women shared ideas on means of stimulating their governments to act on women's issues and their basic rights.

Perhaps the most important tools have been what women have learned from other women, past as well as present. History or "herstory" newly discovered or rediscovered has shown women that the struggle has been continual. As feminist Robin Morgan says, "There's so much documentation now, so much awareness of the previous waves of feminism, of past female culture that is now being unearthed, I just don't see it getting buried again." Women have rebelled against male-dominated, male-directed society, seeking to find their own identities. Women have succeeded in finding their cultural heritage, which has given them pride and inspiration for the battles ahead.

Men as well as some women have viewed the women's movement as a threat. "What do you *want*, anyway?" is the perpetual question. Women have continually had to define what women's liberation really means, and that it is men's liberation, too. Protest over the firing of Professor Marlene Dixon at the University of Chicago in February 1969 prompted this statement by Chicago Women's Liberation, that says it all:

What does women's freedom mean? It means freedom of determination, self-enrichment, the freedom to live one's own life, set one's own goals, the freedom to rejoice in one's own accomplishments. It means the freedom to be one's own person in an integrated life of work, love, play, motherhood: the freedoms, rights and privileges of first class citizenship, of equality in relationships of love and work; the right to choose to make decisions or not to; the right to full self-realization and to full participation in the life of the world. That is the freedom we seek in women's liberation.
To achieve these rights we must struggle as all other oppressed groups must struggle: one only has the rights one fights for. We must come together, understand the common problem, despair, anger, the roots and processes of our oppression; and then together, win our rights to a creative and human life.

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This quilt is a continuation of a long tradition of women's creativity in needlework. We join and carry on the work of our foremothers who in quilting reflected and recorded the history of their times.

The Whig Rose was created in support of the struggle for independence in 1776. It is said that many a Tory husband unknowingly slept under a Whig Rose quilt.

The Radical Rose pattern was done in sympathy for the slaves during the Civil War period. Susan B. Anthony first spoke about equal rights for women at a Quilting Bee.

Kansas Trouble, Road to California, and Lincoln's Platform are a few examples of patterns that reflect their times.

We made this quilt also in answer to those who would commercialize our Bicentennial celebration with . . . revolutionary cars, tv sets, potato chips, and bubble gum . . . leaving us without a spiritual link to those who struggled so hard for the rights that we have now.

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