

A Short History of Black-Owned Land in America

Michelle Bachmann's Crazy Ideas About Black Farmers

By Heather Gray

A few years ago I was asked to speak at Georgia State University about Black-owned land issues and the plight of Black farmers. This was a presentation, then, before professors and students in urban Atlanta. I realized as I spoke that my audience was not informed about rural issues and ongoing racism in the deep South.

Social change is a painstakingly slow process and when you are in the city it's hard to conceive what happens in rural areas - often isolated rural areas.

This is why I was asked to speak, of course, but still it was a revealing experience. They also wanted me to refer to the second phase of the Black farmer lawsuit against the US Department of Agriculture.

I began the presentation at Georgia State University with a delineation of historical dates of the rather constrained opportunities for Black land ownership in America.

Invariably the policies in America resulted in some kind of betrayal followed by Black resistance.

I started with the beginning of the Civil War in 1861. Then Congress creates the Department of Agriculture in 1862.

Then also in 1862 was the Homestead Act - here's a description:

Congress passes the Homestead Act to open western lands to independent farmers rather than slave owners.

This land was available also for freed slaves but there were few as slavery was still the law of the land.

The parcels were 160 acres. Eventually 1.6 million homesteads were granted and 270,000,000 acres of federal land was privatized.

It also dispossessed Native Americans of land and wealth. This was land reform largely for whites the likes of which was never offered to freed slaves after the Civil War or at any time in history. (Wikipedia)

In fact, "American whites received some of the most massive welfare subsidies of any people in the world in the nineteenth century.

How did this happen? A miracle from Jesus? Well.... No. they got these

subsidies by means of a brutal campaign of racial imperialism that took vast lands from native Americans". (World Future Fund)

Clearly, the Homestead Act, as well as the creation of the Department of Agriculture, was partly a response by the federal government to the South and its southern plantation owners.

The South had successfully seceded from the Union, was engaged in war, and had wanted to extend the slaveocracy to the western territories.

A little known fact is that prior to the south seceding from the Union in the 1860's, in the May 1844 edition of "The Liberator" the renowned abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison called for the north to secede from the government for precisely the opposite reason. The reason being that the Constitution of the United States adopted after the Revolutionary War was "at the expense of the colored population of the country."

With the three-fifths clause allowing the enslaved individuals to be counted as three-fifths of a person - albeit a non-vot-



ing person - the South controlled Congress and the nation. Garrison said it was time "to set the captive free by the potency of truth."

By January 1865 Congress adopted the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery. Also in January 1865, while in Savannah after his famous trek through Georgia, General William T. Sherman issues Field Order 15- here's a description:

After meeting with freed slaves in Savannah, Georgia - in what became known as the Savannah

Colloquy - General William T. Sherman responded to their pleas for land.

In January, he issued his famous Field Order 15, which set aside a huge swath of abandoned land along the Georgia and South Carolina coast for black families to have forty acres plots.

He also said that army mules no longer in use would be offered to Black farmers.

This is likely where the "Forty Acres and a Mule" legend began. Sherman never stated whether this was to be a permanent or

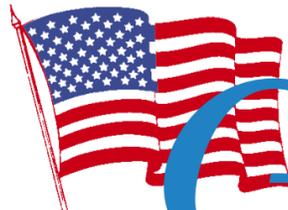
temporary land acquisition. (African American Registry)

With hopes being raised by many in the Black community, Sherman's Field Order was ultimately the beginning of betrayal by the federal government on land distribution. Here's more:

- 1865 (March) Congress establishes the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) providing for the allocation of 'unoccupied land' to freedmen (not to exceed 40 acres). (Continued on page 3A)

Serving these Paid Subscriber Cities

- Enterprise
- Dothan
- Ozark
- Daleville
- New Brockton
- Elba
- Headland
- Hartford



Southeast Alabama Gazette

"Local, State, National & International News. A well read citizen is an aware citizen."

AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY VOICE



The First Amendment "Freedom Of The Press"

50c

Founded May 11, 2006

"A Controlled Circulated Newspaper"

Vol. 9 No. 242 AUGUST 19, 2015

Census: 42.1M Immigrants in US, Record High

By Courtney Coren

There is a record 42.1 million legal and illegal immigrants in the United States, according to a new analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau released Thursday. America's immigration population has surged since the second quarter of 2011, when an additional 4.1 million entered the country both legally and illegally, according to a report by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS).

The immigrant population now totals more than 13.3 percent of the entire U.S. population - its largest share in 105 years.

There is a record 42.1 million legal and illegal immigrants in the United States, according to a new analysis of data from the

U.S. Census Bureau released Thursday.

America's immigration population has surged since the second quarter of 2011, when an additional 4.1 million entered the country both legally and illegally, according to a report by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS).

That number includes the 1.7 million immigrants who entered just in the past year, of which 740,000 are Mexicans. The total Mexican immigration population in the U.S. was 12.1 million as of the second quarter of this year, its highest quarterly total, CIS said.

The immigrant population now totals more than 13.3 percent of the entire U.S. population - its

largest share in 105 years, CIS said of the Census data for the second quarter of 2015.

CIS cites "the significant cutbacks in enforcement in recent years, the permissive nature of the legal immigration system and improvements in the economy" as factors that have contributed to the surge.

There was very little immigration growth from 2007 to 2011, when the numbers began to spike. According to CIS, the growth in the last four years is about equal to the growth from 2000 through 2007.

"For the immigrant population to increase by one million means that significantly more than one million new immigrants must enter the



Immigrants from Central America being picked up in Texas in 2014.

country, because some immigrants already here return to their homeland each year and natural mortality totals 250,000 annually," the Center wrote in its report.

This growth will certainly add to the already heated debate in both

Congress and on the campaign trail among the presidential candidates, but CIS notes that legal immigration has not been on the radar of most candidates. According to the group, about three-quarters of the total immigration population are here legally.

"While the impact of illegal immigration is often the subject of intense national debate, the much larger flow of legal immigrants has seen almost no discussion, even though its impact on American society is much larger," the report concluded.

Commentary

Please Jeb Bush !!!

By Hamm

Please Jeb Bush, don't go there blaming President Obama and Hillary Clinton for the condition that exist in Iraq today, is there fault.

It was your brother (George Walker Bush) fault for invading a country on false information that has killed close to 4 thousand of America's treasured young men and has caused serious permanent wounds to 18,000, some permanent disabling.

Further it was Gorge W. Bush who agreed to

pull the troops out of Iraq before leaving office. It was President Obama who acknowledged that signed agreement; followed through and pulled our troops out.

He left no sizeable military personnel because the Iraq leadership would not signed an agreement to a protective clause that would prevent American troops from being free of Iraq law if they remained.

If they had remained without such an agreement our boys could be arrested for the most

frivolous violation and arrested and imprisoned under Iraq law.

Jeb, please tell the whole story! Why not step up and step out on an issue like VOTING RIGHTS?

Come home Jeb and join the clarion call for all citizens of this God blessed country be given the right to participate at the ballot box and the right to vote.

At least you could thank God for the effort. Can you thank God if you have not worked to do that? CHANGE!

Local School Boards to Receive AASB President's Award

MONTGOMERY, AL - (August 2015) - Fifty-one school boards from across the state will soon receive the 10th annual Alabama Association of School Boards President's Award. The AASB District Meetings will be Aug. 31-Sept. 21 in nine geographical regions.

The Enterprise and Henry County school boards will receive their awards at the District 3

meeting Sept. 21 at Hoppergrass Restaurant in Ozark. James Rodgers of Covington County serves as director of District 3, which also includes school boards in Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Houston and Pike counties and in the cities of Andalusia, Daleville, Dothan, Elba, Eufaula, Geneva, Opp, Ozark and Troy. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. with networking, and

dinner is at 6:30 p.m., followed by a 45-minute program. School board members earn 1 credit hour in the AASB School Board Member Academy for the session (Brochure).

"The AASB President's Award is presented to boards that have had at least 60 percent of their members attend three or more School Board Member Academy courses in the 2014-15 (Continued on page 2A)